



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



.

.

.

.

.

.

. . .

.

. . .

.

.

.

.

. . .

.

.

1

2

3

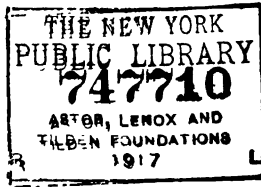
4

EVERYMAN'S WORLD

BY
JOSEPH ANTHONY MILBURN



NEW YORK
ROBERT J. SHORES, PUBLISHER
1916



Copyright, 1916, by
ROBERT J. SHORES, PUBLISHER
New York

ALCOY ACORN
OLDS
VINTAGE

SHORES PRESS
NEW YORK

In Memory of
WILLIAM BALLARD HOYT
AN ENTIRE MAN—A PERFECT FRIEND

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I AN INTIMATE WORD	1
II DEMOCRACY OF THE HIGHER RICHES . . .	10
III GREATNESS OF OUR INHERITANCE . . .	19
IV THE MAGIC OF THE SPIRIT	29
V PERSONALITY	42
VI A NEXUS OF THE TALENTS	51
VII A FINE EGOTISM	62
VIII SPHERE OF ACTION	76
IX IMPORTANCE OF ATMOSPHERE	91
X LARGER VISION	109
XI DISTRIBUTION OF LIFE	129
XII MASTERY	147
XIII OUTWARDNESS	164
XIV PLAYING THE GAME	182
XV PRESENTNESS	205
XVI THE SACRAMENT OF LOVE	226
XVII TREASURES OF DARKNESS	249
XVIII ON THE SUMMIT	274

EVERYMAN'S WORLD

CHAPTER I

AN INTIMATE WORD

My sun has passed the meridian and is moving, with rhythmic and deliberate stride, toward the western horizon, beyond which lies the alluring world of mystery and wonder.

As I look back over the years, I feel that I should say a liturgy of thanksgiving to Fortune for the lavishness of her bounty toward me. She has not always consulted my desires, nor humored my moods. I have found her to be more a Stoic than a Sybarite in her manners and methods. She has made me pay with a sufficient liberality for the many felicities I have enjoyed through the grace of her favor. In the things of lesser importance, the mysterious providence that rules over the affairs of men has been rather frugal with me; but I have been blessed beyond measure in the

one treasure of priceless significance, the treasure of life. I have lived! With a great passion of gratitude flooding my heart, I can say, without extravagance, that through all the years life, despite its seriousness and its shadow, has been a sweet triumph. If I maintain, until the curtain falls upon the final act of the marvelous drama, the serene vision of the day of entire sanity and perfect health, the *Nunc Dimittis* will be said with a smile upon my lips. To use the quaint phrase of our more spiritual fathers of the long ago, my adieu shall be "an ejaculatory prayer"—"O God, I thank Thee for the wondrous glory of the world and the unspeakable beatitude of life!"

In the largest sense, life has lacked, for me, somewhat in the completeness and the smoothness of its adjustments. I have lived in *medias res*, between two worlds—the one dead, the other powerless to be born. I came in my early youth to this great and wonderful country. I am proud of my American citizenship. It is a citizenship politically without the least taint of hyphenation. I believe with all my heart in the toast of Stephen Decatur, "Our country . . . may she always be in the right; but our country, right or wrong!"

I exult in America, in its noble spaces, its superb historic accomplishment, its regal hospitality; and in the alertness, the intelligence, the interestingness and the efficiency of its people. And yet the color of place, the physical genius, the national habit of thought and action and speech, the tradition of ideals and of manners, that I imbibed as a sensitive lad in the north of England have lingered with me, an unforgettable legacy of impressions that have deepened with the years. I am in the matter of political temperament and national fealty altogether American, but some part of me, the folk-consciousness, the inheritance of Albion, refused to voyage with me to these hospitable shores. My spirit still hovers, with a tenderness and a longing that almost touch the edge of pain, over the old scenes, over the Cheviot Hills, the moors, the braes, the burns and the meadows, beautiful with the glamour that fills the uncritical eyes and saturated with the joy that dwells in the care-free heart of youth.

While living in the Middle West it was my privilege to enjoy the noble friendship of a man who was a Jew with a strain of the Gentile in his veins. A tender, almost feminine, sorrow rested

upon his soul, the unmistakable sorrow that is so often consequent upon racial miscegenation. He was deficient in the unity of racial type. The Gentile was an alien in the heart of the Jew, and the Jew was an unwelcome guest in the heart of the Gentile. The elements of race in him were incommiscible. They were too well-bred to clash, and too intensely individual and characteristic to harmonize. He was an inhabitant, by necessity, of two hemispheres; and the ceaseless, silent controversy of race in his blood wrought a deep sorrow in his heart. My life has been burdened, very slightly, but still quite perceptibly, by the abiding shadow of a miscegenation of a somewhat different kind, the miscegenation of nationalities. I am American, but not wholly, incontrovertibly American. The tree of my soul has grown in the generous air of this glorious country, but the roots are way over there, far across the sea, in England—in the England of the north country, the England of the border feuds and border minstrelsy.

I have been denied, by reason of the infelicity of my individual tastes and reticences, the somewhat questionable delight of popularity—a delight that, despite its questionableness, gives a

vivid zest to life, and that atones for a multitude of privations and delinquencies. Popularity is an opiate. It is the most potent anodyne of the spirit. With one movement of its magic fingers, it magnifies our vanity and draws a curtain before the eye of the soul, veiling from its sight the barrenness of its actual possessions.

I am not sure whether I should rejoice in my obscurity as a token of good fortune or bow my head in an act of contrition because the Goddess of Fame has swept by me with an austere disdain. There was an hour in the mid-morning of life when this lady of illusions sought converse with me. She approached me, a winsome presence, gently undulating like the waves of the ocean in its tranquil mood, robed in garments of light and tremulous with the loveliness of an April day which conceals in the hard brilliance of the sunshine the destructive storm, the violence of hail and lightning and wind that lurks in its treacherous heart. She encircled me with her charms, and I was almost on the verge of capitulating to her seductions when it occurred to me to ask the terms of the compact.

"The superlative talent," she answered. "But,

alas!" I said, "the superlative talent is not mine. I do not belong, by profusion of temperament or affluence of faculty, with the lords of light, the creators of beauty, or the rulers of men. I have neither the afflatus nor the power of endurance to reach the towering heights where the masters dwell and reign with the ease of rulership that is the distinction of the mighty ones of earth. The gift extraordinary has been withheld from me. I cannot speak in the great way. I cannot think in the great way. I cannot write in the great way. I cannot act in the great way. I belong to the world of ordinary men, the men of the single talent; and the man of the single talent can no more achieve the honors of the man of the two or the five talents than the finite can achieve the infinite."

"Ah! but there is yet another way," replied my lady, "to the paradise of popular esteem. It is not so pleasant, so high, so royal a way as the way of the superlative gift, but it will bring you with certain step to the goal you seek. Since you cannot soar, you must learn to stoop—stoop to conquer. Shut your eyes to the vision of the ideal! Meet the multitude on its own plane of

life—think with its mind, love with its heart, hate with its passions, pray with its prejudices, worship with its animosities, humor its moods, flatter its vanities as a sycophant, follow in its footsteps as a slave, while posing as its counselor and leader—and the world will crown you with its honors and gladden your heart with its applause!”

“But, dear lady of renown,” I pleaded, “these very mundane terms offend my sense of honor. They would involve the spirit in a ceaseless finesse that would be blighting and ignominious. Fame is important: it enhances the talent and enlarges the sphere of opportunity and of service; but it is surely not worth the cost of the soul. I would rather be a minnow in the running brook whose waters are fresh and clear than the largest fish in a foul and stagnant pool. There is a goal of felicity, and there is a way to that goal; and in any well-ordered life the way is as important as the goal, and as vital to one’s well-being, to one’s honor, to one’s supreme and ultimate achievement.”

Thereupon the goddess, flashing upon me eyes of beauteous witchery, but burning with an unmistakable contempt, swept out of my sight, leaving

me in a long, unbroken obscurity that has safeguarded my peace of mind from the fretting touch of envy and afforded me many hours for happy communion with the haunting and elusive mysteries of life, the mystery of the Infinite Spirit, the mystery of nature, the mystery of humanity, and the lesser—though, to me, the more intimate—mystery of my own soul.

Yet, despite the mild anxieties born of modest circumstances, the slender measure of my importance and the secret sorrows that I carry in the inmost privacy of my heart, wherever I go and whatever I do, I have found life to be a success—not a high success measured in the terms of the spectacular and imposing, but an infinite success construed in the terms of life and love and beauty. The years, bringing in their viewless hands a countless wealth of treasure, have wound their way through my heart with a cumulative sweetness and a lyric charm. A discovery has been vouchsafed to me which is more essentially interwoven with the melodious flow of life than the most vital discoveries of science. To rejoice in the bliss, the bounty and the beauty of the sun, we happily need no familiarity with the physics of light and

of heat. To enjoy the grace of contour and the fragrance of the flower world—of the primrose, the carnation, the violet, the daisy—we need not go from garden to garden, from meadow to meadow, with a botany in hand. But to live our life with an abounding consciousness of its magnitude, its freedom, its joyousness, its beguiling beauty—this is an art. It is the supreme art, for it is the art in which all other arts—music, painting, sculpture, literature—find their *raison d'être* and their completion. Unlike the lesser arts, however, the art of life is a democracy, and its secrets unfold themselves with a noble impartiality to all who ask in the power of a great passion and seek in the devotion of a tireless patience.

CHAPTER II

DEMOCRACY OF THE HIGHER RICHES

A GREAT and beautiful life is quite easily within the grasp of every one. It is permitted to the few only to be highly prosperous in material things, for physical wealth is by its very nature oligarchic and exclusive. What one man owns, his neighbor cannot own. The possession of the few necessarily involves the dispossession of the multitudes, for material riches are limited and not universal. The world of property is inexorably a world of inequality, of division, of caste, of mastery and of servitude.

Nor can the more ethereal rewards of the intellectual life be the portion of the multitudes, since to attain the distinction that belongs to the highly cultured mind there must be leisure, an inspirational environment, academic opportunity, and, above all, a virility and prowess of intellect that by reason of its excess of endowment be-

comes a force of separation and preëminence. The Alps would lose their significance as objects of wonder and admiration, were all mountains of alpine dignity and elevation. Shakespeare is Shakespeare by virtue of his magical talents and his supernal faculties. He reigns alone because of the majesty and lavishness of his endowments. There must be a rare conspiracy of gift, sphere and opportunity before one can grave in song "The Grecian Urn" of Keats, or achieve the richness, the luxuriousness and the delicacy of the prose of Edmund Burke.

Celebrity, whether it be in the domain of letters, of painting, or of sculpture, means exclusiveness. Were the victorious life and intellectual distinction synonymous, the most of us would be condemned by the paucity of our gifts and the feebleness of our light to utter failure. Stars of the first magnitude constitute a very limited aristocracy in the sidereal world, and intellects of planetary mass and compass likewise constitute a very imposing and select aristocracy in the kingdom of the fine arts. The majority of us are committed to certain disappointment if we seek to find our well-being in the glamour of social pres-

tige, of publicity, of fame. The few are illustrious and important purely by the law of contrast. A man in a great measure creates his own personality, but fame, prestige, reputation—these factitious and external honors are conferred and not seldom thrust upon him by the multitudes, who, in the act of crowning their king, admit their own inferiority. It is axiomatic that the distinction of the gods involves the indistinction of their satellites and subjects. Were all wild animals lions, the lion would cease to be the monarch of the jungle. The lion is the monarch because the lesser tribes fear him and acclaim the magistracy of his strength. Our pursuit, then, of the great life is foredoomed to sheer failure if we seek for it in the world of acrid competition, with its sequential victory and preëminency for the few and its certain defeat and obscurity for the many. It is demonstrably clear that the most of us can be neither imposingly rich nor commanding of intellect, nor outstanding in our social importance. Concentrated strength implies a diffused weakness, just as the brilliancy of the stars implies the vast interstellar darkness we call night.

I said the great, the beautiful, the triumphant

life is a democracy. Its prerogatives are the prerogatives of all. Its honors are the honors of all. Its blessings are the blessings of all. By virtue of its divine catholicity, it rises above all distinctions of power, of talent, of environment, of fortune. Granted an adequate passion of desire and a sufficient instinct of pursuit, the essential treasures of life are equally within the reach and realization of the rich and the poor, the high and the low, the scholar and the peasant, the master and the servant. The empyrean of vision, beauty, love, freedom—the supersensual over-world where the great spirits of this earth have their abode—is insusceptible of division and circumscription. The kingdom of heaven is catholic and universal. Its citizenship is a divine proletariat. The earth is, and perhaps ought to be, the sphere of an aggressive and insistent individualism, but the sky is splendidly communistic. However vast and dominant my talent of appropriation may be, I cannot delimit the stars. I cannot write in lines of shadow the word “mine” athwart the light of Jupiter, or of Venus. David, the gifted son of Jesse, was richer as a shepherd lad than he was as the crowned king of Israel. As king, he reigned

over only a small fragment of the earth's surface: as shepherd-poet, he was the owner of the heavens and of the great Jehovah's glory. As king, he was possessed of a kingdom narrowly bounded by space, by time and by the caprices of his subjects: as poet and prophet, he was dowered with the uncircumfered wealth of the whole world.

The unkempt gamin of the streets and gutters, if he be blessed with the seeing eye and the sensitive imagination of the poet, is more successful so far as the actual wealth of life is concerned than the plethoric landowner who has so submerged his soul in the economic values of his narrow acres that he has lost the larger vision of the firmament, its immensity and its splendor. Villon, though a wastrel and a vagabond, lived a more victorious life than the most resplendent courtier of his day, for the real knight is more than a creature of ribands and garters; he is a man of spacious thoughts, of subtle imaginations, of high and fine emotions. Who would not rather be Villon, a vagrant and an outcast, rich in the talents and the beatitudes of the kingdom of beauty, than the most illustrious prince of his generation, clothed with an ephemeral prestige and adorned with daz-

zling honors, who lived his brief day of empty and paltry glory to sink at last into an oblivion that no resurrection shall disturb!

Where are the rich; where are the noble; where are the priests and the high priests; where are the potentates; where are the scribes and the masters learned in the law of the day of Jesus of Galilee? Who thinks of them; who knows them; who honors them? But the sweet and gracious Galilean—"the best of men that e'er wore earth about him, . . . the first true gentleman that ever breathed"—we remember Him; we know Him; we honor Him; we crown Him with our praise and magnify Him with our worship, our adoration and our love! Why this homage? He was poor. He was of obscure origin. He had a limited and meager education. He was wholly without social luster and without the distinction that belongs to academic culture. He was a king without a kingdom—a prophet whose mottled discipleship was constituted chiefly of tanners, publicans, fishermen, nondescripts, disreputables and prodigals. His gospel does not amicably consort with the actualities of common life. His morality is of an inconvenient fineness. There is no

community of nature between His celestial idealism and our very terrestrial instincts and propensities. His empire was Golgotha, and His throne a cross. Yet, despite His poverty, His local insignificance, the isolation wrought by His wondrous ideality, the immediate failure of His dreams, the collapse of His ambitions and the tragical consummation of His august Messianic enterprise, He lives to-day the supreme figure of history—His gospel a transcendent power, His church the most magisterial and formative institution in the world, and His life a life of superlative authority and beauty and triumph. The Jesus of Israel reigns the most kingly presence in historic time, and rules the over-lord of every heart responsive to the appeal and the charm of the ideal and the alluring beauty of holiness, because He lived His swift and eager days, with a solitary grandeur of vision, of passion and of devotion, in a blessed coalescence with the Eternal; and to live in blessed coalescence with the Eternal is to live and to love and to serve and to accomplish in the grand manner, in the great and magnificent way.

This fair, white world of the spirit; this high, far-sweeping world of flame and light and grace and freedom and love, where Socrates, Vergil, Raphael, Thomas à Kempis, Shakespeare, Dante, Fénelon, Lincoln, St. John, Buddha, Jesus have found inspiration, mastery, serenity of mind, the peace of the celestial vision and the life triumphant, the life whose beauty faileth not, and "whose glory fadeth not away"—this world is your inheritance and mine. It is a divine patrimony, of whose treasures and felicities we can be deprived only by our own obtuseness and perversity. No man need suffer defeat; no man need crucify his spirit with the dark consciousness of failure; no man need miss the way to the Land of Promise, the City of God, if he have but the fortitude to break once and forever from the most false and the most cruel of all servitudes, the servitude of the spirit to the despotism of things and matter and externalities, and possess himself of his inalienable heritage, the heritage of a will in sweet conformity with the will of the Eternal; a mind aglow with the infinity, the wonder and the mystery of Truth; a heart abounding with a wealth

of love so divine that it grows while it consumes its own substance; a body tremulously sensitive to the melody and the music of the world; and a spirit transfigured with the light and centered in the inerrant wisdom of God.

CHAPTER III

GREATNESS OF OUR INHERITANCE

I REMEMBER saying to a mountaineer who was in the prime of life, finely intelligent and endowed with mechanical gifts of a high order, that he should leave his cabin in a southern state and go to the city in which I lived, where he would find a sphere and an opportunity worthy of his talents. His answer to my invitation took on the dignity of a revelation. It revealed a largeness of nature and a sweep of imagination that brought, as with a lightning's flash, the poverty and the prose of my own ideals of well-being into painful visibility.

"Why should I go to a city? What would I find there to interest me? I should earn a little more money, and, perhaps, work would be more regular. But what would become of me, of my life, my soul, my freedom, in the city, with its narrow streets, its smoke, its noises, its confusions,

its cramped quarters, its unrest and its suffocating air? I should perish in the city. I should be homesick—homesick for the sky, for the cliffs, for the forests, for the birds, for the largeness and the freedom of the mountain life.” As he spoke, he opened wide his arms as if to include the planet in his embrace. “What a world it is,” said this woodsman-poet of the Cumberland plateau—“what a world it is, so wonderful, so interesting, so changing; such a great, kind, loving, companionable world! Wherever you look, or wherever you go, there you find life and beauty. And then, there is so much room! It is all so big. The sky is big. The storms are big. The forests are big. The mountains are big. The sunrise and the sunset are big. The days are big with the sheer joy of living. The nights are big with splendor and silence and repose.”

Then came the affirmation of an egoism that was divine in its audacity and its finality: “All this is mine—all this freedom, this beauty, this sky, this mountain world is mine! No man can take it from me. It is all mine. It is my kingdom. It is my inheritance. It is all I have. It is all I want—all I ever want. It has a satisfaction for

every need, a message for every mood, a strength for every emergency. The boisterous winds of March, the caressing breeze of a June day, the trees and the bushes—the oaks, the white oak, the red oak, the black oak, the hickory, the poplar, the ash, the walnut, the black gum, the sumac—the birds, the red bird, the mocking bird, the turtle-dove, the goldfinch, the thrush—all the music and the color of this mountain world fill my spirit with a great and sweet contentment. I am satisfied, perfectly satisfied with my riches, my possessions, my kingdom. I am happy. Can you say as much for yourself? No, you take the city and its gold. My wealth is here, in the free air, in all the varied loveliness and the glorious spaces of the hills, the plains and the sky.”

This woodsman of the mountains, by virtue of the inheritance of a kingly spirit, had discovered a great secret. He had learned to confront life and measure its transcendent opportunities with a splendid world-consciousness. He was poor, with the undistressing poverty of the mountaineer—with a poverty that had in it no touch of meanness or squalor, no hint of shame or degradation. He was clad in khaki, somewhat shabby from the

fraying touch of time and circumstance. His larder contained no greater abundance than provisions for himself and his family for the space of a week. And yet he was rich with all the boundless wealth of the world that he had made his own through the poetic sensitiveness of his imagination and the imperial sweep of his soul.

What a world it is that ranges away in a large and defiant freedom beyond the petty constrictions of our property laws, our deeds, our mortgages, our stocks, our bonds, our investments and our bank account! It is a world of illimitable vastness, of exhaustless variety, secreting in its fathomless deeps an infinite mystery, ever inviting our scrutiny and our solution. We soar in thought into its spaces, and we revel for forty, fifty, seventy years in its abysses; and yet we are playing, like children on the beach of the ocean, on the edge of its boundless wonders. Our minds are attuned to the elementary magnitudes of mathematics. We think in units—in hundreds, thousands, tens and hundreds of thousands—but when we endeavor to survey and run the north and south lines, the east and west lines of our world-estate, we have to deal with magnitudes that leave us

4

dazed—with billions, trillions, quintillions, nonillions—nonillions of miles in space and nonillions of worlds, countless suns and moons and planets, innumerable constellations and galaxies. It is a wonderful world, wonderful in its hugeness, wonderful in its eloquence, wonderful in its reticence, wonderful in its sublimity, wonderful in its allurements and wonderful in its elusiveness, growing with our growth and unfolding in an ever-augmenting majesty and mystery with every enlargement of our vision and every advancement of our understanding.

This world, so enormous in its dimensions, with horizons receding at every point of approach into the Infinite, is, in every atom of it, in every detail and lineament of it, the habitation of fathomless, yet most entrancing, mysteries—the mysteries of origin and process and destiny; the mysteries of affinity and repulsion, of cohesion and dispersion, of love and hate, of harmony and discord, of good and evil, of life and death. The least atom contains a philosophy of being that has baffled the metaphysic of all the ages. The most modest flower—the buttercup of the meadows; the primrose, resting softly in its bed of moss at the foot

of the oak tree; the daisy that you will find in your walks through the fields on a summer's day—concentrates within the deep, still heart of it an encyclopædia of culture, a university of the sciences and the arts—the science of being, the science of creation, the science of morphology, the science of life; and the arts of form and of color; and that which is the consummation of all the sciences and all the arts, the science and the art of divinity.

“Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies,
Hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
Little flower, but if I could understand
What you are, root and all and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.”

That is true! The flower in the crannied wall holds in the inmost recess of its being a philosophy of the cosmos.

The world is a progressive series of interrogations. Every problem solved is an open door leading toward a mansion of more intricate problems. The problem of the atom touches the problem of a planet, and the problem of a planet opens the way into the problem of the universe. There is no resting place for the mind in all the vast scheme

and enterprise of the world—no elevation, however high, where the spirit can stand erect and affirm its mastery of being and of life. However rich may be the treasures of wisdom we acquire as we journey along the highways of culture, we are, mercifully, never bereft of the essence of all pleasure, the passion of pursuit. "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge." Every extension of vision reveals a finer glory in the world. "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in." This is the cry of the Eternal Psalmist to your soul. He bids you lift up the gates of your intellect, of your imagination, of your emotions, of your passions, that He, the King of Glory—the glory of sun and moon and star; the glory of heaven and earth; the glory of sky and sea and meadow; the glory of the trees and the flowers, the hills and the glens; the glory of sight and of sound, of sunshine and of symphony—may enter into your spirit and make you great with His greatness, glad with His gladness and beautiful with His beauty.

What an offense it is against the dignity and

the prerogative of the soul to incarcerate ourselves in an illusion of poverty when we are affluent with a cosmic plenitude of wealth! And how malignant is that perversity which causes us, habitually, to murmur over the continuance of the night when all we have to do is to open our eyes to live in the full and radiant bounty of the zenith sun! All poverty is an illusion, except the poverty of the sealed vision and the immured talent. The great essential wealth—the wealth of health, the wealth of life, the wealth of high spirits, the wealth of beauty, the wealth of sweet and exquisite sensations, the wealth of love—is nobly impartial. The primitive and indispensable blessings constitute a divine democracy.

The first lesson we all must learn in the mystical art of happiness is to enter into this inheritance of world-possession that no man can take from us. The whole world is ours for the seeking, the willing, the seeing and the taking. The beatitude of health is subject to the poor man's will more certainly than it is at the command of the rich man's check book. The priceless treasures of Nature—the fresh, green fields of the springtime; the trees, robed in their delicate finery of snow on a winter's

day; the surge, the beat and the swell of the ocean; the music and the murmur, the joy and the passion of the world of life; the sweetness and the aroma of the rose; the fragile and exquisite grace of the lily; the solemn splendor of the setting sun; the chatter, the anthems, the sonatas, the nocturnes, the harmonies of wingéd things; the wonder, the mystery, the charm of flower, bird and cloud, that have glorified the poet's eye and flooded his heart with incommunicable delight—these treasures that constitute the real opulence and triumph of life are not the peculiar and exclusive possession of the rich and the mighty and the learned; they belong to all who are inspired with the passion of life, to all who are coerced with a divine avarice for beauty. The great things carry with them, wherever they go, their own credentials. They need neither savant, nor critic, nor poet, nor painter, nor commentator to explain their worth and to lay bare their glory. The vision splendid and "the music of the spheres" respond not to him who is expert in the laws of light, or the science of sound, but to him—whether he be prince or peasant, prophet or shepherd, poet or plowman—who is endowed with the seeing eye and the

hearing ear. The skylark sings not to the ornithologist, but to man. And the charm and fragrance of the violet may be more the possession of a sensitive child than of the savant learned to the last word of science in the mysteries of the flora of this planet. God has put a marvelous inheritance at the common man's disposal, at the command of the man of the single talent. But, alas! most of us prefer to abide in poverty—a pitiful poverty of sensation, of imagination, of culture, of experience, of joy, of life—in the midst of all this world-treasure, because, by some curse of original sin, we would rather gather pebbles along the wayside than consort with stars in the heavens.

CHAPTER IV

THE MAGIC OF THE SPIRIT

EVERY man carries deep within him, at the core and center of his being, the secret of felicity and the mastery of destiny. The imperial force of life is the spirit, the self in us. It gives to the transient day its tone and value, and to the totality of experience its complexion and worth. The self, in a very real sense, is the artificer of its own world. The universe for every man radiates from his own soul as a center, and it assumes the character and the dimensions of the soul from which it radiates.

Life varies in value, in desirability, in the ardor and the cogency of its appeal, from day to day, from year to year, from decade to decade, according to the exaltation or depression of this interior mystery we call the self. The ray of light that comes leaping to the eye from the palpitating heart of the topaz may bring its luminosity from the

sun, but it takes its quality and the warmth of its color from the structure of the eye and the responsiveness of its vision.

When vitality is normal, the world is an equipollence of opposing forces and tendencies, and life is a mild sanity, equally unmenaced by a dismal pessimism or an exaggerated optimism. When vitality is low, the world becomes enrobed in shadows. It was in the subnormal region whose sky is dominantly austere and somber in which Amiel lived and thought and wrote. His pensiveness, his disillusionment, his controversial attitude toward the angular decrees of circumstance and the unpleasant pressures of destiny, his soft and almost feminine resentments of the rough, familiar touch of the time-spirit as it passed by him, all the mild depression, the habitual grayness of tone that constitute at once the charm and the sterility of the *pensée* of Amiel have their origin, not in the actualities of the world that lies beyond experience, but in an inherent subnormality of spirit. The ego in Amiel was deficient in the push and glow of life, in positiveness of impact, in the splendid affirmativeness that is a condition of perfect health in thought and conduct. The

world was too much with him. It dominated and oppressed him and bore him down to the most bitter of all defeats, the defeat of an invincible despair. He was crushed under the weary burden of this rough and stalwart world, as one has seen a skilled wrestler, clean of limb, taut and stout and fine of thew, borne to the ground by the sheer strength of muscle and the insupportable weight of his opponent.

When, however, we meet the pressure of the world and the issues of life with an ego that is supernormal in vitality, with an ego that is lambent with faith, radiant with the glow of health and actuated with a resistless energy of will, then, by some subtle magic, some divine wizardry of the spirit, we construe the world in our own image. We see it and its problems, its struggles, its trials and its obstacles, *couleur de rose*. Its resistances become for us a force of evocation, of culture, of self-realization. The minor consciousness of the burden of life is submerged and engulfed in the major consciousness of its greatness, its sweetness, its delight.

It is in the power of each one of us, by the aid of a fine, autocratic self-consciousness, supple-

mented by an imperious and insistent will—whether we live in palace or in prison, in mansion or in hovel, robed in the ermine of royalty, or clothed in the fustian of the artisan, amid circumstances amiable or adverse—to woo and make our personal possession this supernormal energy, this élan vital of the spirit, this push and verve of the soul, whose miraculous function is to construe the dissonances and discords of life into a song of victory, to educe from “every loss a gain to match,” to evoke the whiteness of the lily from the black earth in which it grows, to nourish joy at the breast of sorrow, and to turn the gloom of the night into the gladness of the day.

We are not fated by the parsimony of opportunity and the ill-nature of circumstance to cast our lot with the invertebrates, the derelicts, the ineffectives, the “sour-complected” hosts of failure overmastered by the harsh usage of the world. By the might and majesty of the God-inspired soul in us, we belong with the immortals, and we should dwell on the heights far beyond Parnassus, the abode of Homer and Æschylus and Shakespeare and Keats; far beyond Mount Zion, the abode of Isaiah and Ezekiel and Jeremiah and the

Psalmist; we should dwell with the Man of Galilee, with St. Paul, with St. Francis of Assisi, with St. John of the Cross, with Fénelon, with Francis de Sales, on the Mount of Transfiguration, from whose heights, through eyes illumined with celestial light, we may behold the world palpitating with a divine beauty and the drama of life moving, under the compulsion of an infinite wisdom, toward a finale beautiful beyond our fairest dreams.

It is not my purpose, nor my wish, in these utterances, to imprison life in an idealism that ignores the actuality of the world external to consciousness and that negates with a blind and bland audacity the deliverances of our sense impressions. The world is very real to me—real in its material stuff, real in its physical outlines, real in its beauty, real in its strife and struggle, real in its culture, real in its illiteracy, real in its joy, real in its grief, real in the mystery we call “life” and real also in the mystery we name “death.”

When the facile metaphysician, whether he be of the cult of Christian Science or an exponent of that rather vague institution known as The New Thought, tells me that matter is an illusion—that it has no existence beyond the circumference of

thought—he does not leave me convinced; he leaves me chilled and wondering what may be the peculiar lesion in his thought processes. When he tells me that pain is a subjective malady having its origin and existence in the mortal mind—that it has no root in matter, because matter is non-existent; that it has no habitation in the nerves, because nerves have no reality outside of thought—he does not win me over to his factitious optimisms; he, rather, adds one more enigma to the burden of my spirit. The obliquity of his metaphysic is, to me, a deeper shadow upon the perfection of the universe than the irregularities of our bodies and the perversities of our nerves. When, rising yet higher into the sublimated upper kingdoms of his nebulous philosophy, he tells me that the last enemy, Death, is likewise a fiction of the mind, a disordered dream, a mere appearance, an illusion of the senses, the most unreal of all unrealities, his euphemisms not only affront my intelligence; they disturb my faith in the fair dealing of the Eternal.

It is vastly to be preferred that man should contend with the dark and forbidding antagonists, Poverty and Pain and Sorrow and Death, than

that he should be shut up in a scheme of things that has its impulse in the unvaracity of the Infinite and its continuance in a cosmic diplomacy that conceals the form of a Satan under the garments of an Angel of Light. Sorrow as a reality is, no doubt, bitter; but it has its own dignity and a noble function to accomplish in the divine economy. But sorrow as an illusion is not a mitigation; it is an insult—an insult to the mind, an insult to the heart—for it turns the strenuous, austere drama of life into a smug and smiling farce. Death as a reality is tragical; yet it moves in our midst with august mien; and it carries in its shadowed hands countless blessings invisible through the veil of our tears, but which time and reflection will bring into perfect clarity. However, death as an illusion, an appearance, a sham—all its remoteness, its reticence, its immobility, its unresponsiveness to the pathetic wailings of the heart crushed and desolated, all the trappings, the lesions, the woes of death, illusion! This is not philosophy! It is irony in its most cruel, its most taunting form. It amazes me that any one can be willing to buy peace of heart at a cost that involves a double outrage, an outrage to our reason

and an outrage to our love. The world would be bereft of much of its charm and would lose vastly in sublimity as an institution of discipline and culture if we should deny it external being, if by our soft and nerveless philosophies we should refine its substance into non-existence and transform its warm and vivid actualities into the pale "stuff of which dreams are made."

For us—at least in our present state and form of consciousness—the universe is a dualism. It cannot by any audacity of logic be compressed into unity, whether it be a unity of matter or a unity of spirit. The world, for the man of unsophisticated intelligence, is a composite of spirit and matter, of the conscious self and the great outer world that presses upon and nourishes the self in him with all its myriad ministries of life and truth and beauty and love. However fantastical our thinking may be, however intense our passion to discover a unity of being, that can find no permanent lodgment in the human mind under its present limitations of thought, two worlds always confront us—the inner world of the soul, the spirit, the personality, and the vast, vague, obtrusive world that lies beyond the periphery of self, and

which is ever striving to enrich the self with its infinity of content, with its obvious facts and its hidden wisdom, with its lights and its shadows, its smiles and its tears, its joys and its sorrows, its suavities and its asperities, its coronations and its crosses, and which the self in us is ever striving to master, to find the rational order in its apparent disorder and the ultimate meaning that lies entombed in the deeps of its present confusions. No matter with what subtlety we spiritualize our metaphysic, our religion, our philosophy of life and conduct, the great external world—with its suns and planets; its mountains, valleys, streams and oceans; its rocks, trees and flowers; its boundless wealth of living, sentient creatures; its mysteries of suffering, love and self-consciousness; its Epiphanies, Gethsemanes, Golgothas and Ascensions—remains a permanency of thought and also a permanency beyond thought.

It is a vast and intricate world, this outer world of matter and of circumstance. And yet, with all its vastness and intricacy, it is subject to the sovereignty of the spirit, to the magical authority of personality. The world is, to the creative spirit of man, what the marble is to the sculptor. The

sculptor must subdue the marble to the expression of the ideal form which he has fashioned out of the ethereal substance of his dreams. In like manner, the spirit of man, instinct with a divine masterfulness, must transmute the concealments, the resistances, the obduracies of the world-stuff into vision, into character, into beauty, into an ever-increasing fullness and richness of personality.

We marvel at the wonderful works wrought by the Jesus of history. We read of His walking on the sea of Gennesaret, His turning water into wine on the occasion of the marriage feast at Cana in Galilee, His giving sight to the blind, and the wondrous transfiguration upon the mount; and we shake our heads and say, "This is not history; it is legend. This is not fact; it is a beautiful, tender fiction, woven out of the adoring, though uncritical, imagination of primitive Christianity." Yet every man—the lowest as certainly as the highest; the most illiterate as surely as the most learned—carries within his spirit a miracle more wonderful than any marvel recorded in the New Testament. He carries within him the miracle of miracles, the miracle that is the fecund source and the mighty

THE MAGIC OF THE SPIRIT 39

dynamic of all lesser miracles, the miracle that brings man into conjunction with the exhaustless power of God and that makes him master of the world, the miracle of the will. The will is the man. It is the power of divinization; it is the God in him. "Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." This utterance of the highest wisdom from the Book of Revelation, by St. John the Divine, is an appeal to our dignity, our nobility, our heroism. He does not say "whosoever thinks," "whosoever desires," "whosoever feels," "whosoever dreams," but "whosoever wills, let him drink of the water of life freely." This is the logic of our incarnation. This is why our spirit is inwrought with all the problems, the marvels, the secrecies, the obscurities of this planet earth. We are put here—not by any accident, not by any caprice or whim of the world-process, but by an austere wisdom that is infallible in all its decrees and impeccable in all its methods—that we may drink of the water of life. The end of life is not the accumulation of great wealth; it is not transient, perishable honor; it is not fitful and insubstantial fame; it is not treacherous and ca-

precious renown: the end of life is life—the life abundant; life, strong, full-orbed, stately, sensitive, fine.

The one stupendous duty that devolves upon every man—the duty that takes up into itself and gives a meaning to every other duty, as the light takes up into itself and gives a meaning to the beauty that lurks in the depths of the emerald or the sapphire—is the will to live. The will of man is the most lordly thing in all this universe. It is the incarnate God in us. It is the logos, the eternal word, in us. It is the Christ in us—the Christ who creates and uncreates, who forms and unforms, who strives and wrestles and conquers and rules and reigns, and at whose feet all the world, and the glory of it, lies subject. By the magic of the will, we may turn every cross into a blessing—poverty into opulence, resistance into power, weakness into strength, defeat into victory, sin into holiness, hate into love, doubt into vision, sorrow into gladness and the mystery of death into the mystery of eternal life.

We cannot, by any strategy of the intellect, by any legerdemain of syllogism, eliminate poverty and evil and suffering from the scheme of things.

THE MAGIC OF THE SPIRIT 41

They are there, whether we admit or deny their presence; and we must meet with and confront them, however poignant may be our aversion, however bitter our hostility, however keen our dislike. But it is our prerogative; it is our glory, by the power and artifice of the will, to transcend them, to utilize them in the attainment of our ideals, to transform them into beatitudes, to rise upon these rungs of trial and infelicity toward higher things and to create out of their dark substance, though as by fire, the crown of life—the one crown that symbolizes a complete and indisputable victory.

CHAPTER V

PERSONALITY

IF a man be the creator of his own kingdom and the artificer of his own destiny, if the wealth of well-being depend upon the wealth of consciousness and the content of experience, how important a matter is the culture and the enrichment of personality! Life is the offspring of the marriage of personality with the world. If we woo the world with our senses alert and hospitable, with our passions and emotions at the flood, with open arms, with open eyes, with open minds, with open hearts, the world will respond to us, fullness for fullness, passion for passion, love for love. If, on the other hand, we bring to the world a personality that is inert, slender and insensitive, the nuptials will be a failure; for though the world's dot is large and as rich as infinity, the treasure at our command is just the amount of treasure we can grasp and the kind of treasure we can appreciate. The world-spirit is exquisitely

responsive, but it is also punctiliously just. It responds to our appeals, not according to our wishes, nor even according to the measure of our needs, but according to our capacities and intensities. Pearls are not found on the seashore by the idle saunterer. They are the reward of the skilled diver, who has learned, through long and systematic training, to master the ocean depths in which they find their habitation. Nature is always in scrupulous alignment with our forces. The equations she metes out at the behest of our talents and abilities are unimpeachable in their exactitude and equity. A diamond in the hand of a savage has no greater value than a bit of crystal of equal bulk, because the savage cannot differentiate, either through physical vision or economic intuition, the diamond from the crystal. The sunset is merely a gorgeous pastel of vast surface to the imagination that goes upon its feet, that is terrene in its structure and affinities; while to the imagination that soars, whose native element is the spacious, pellucid sky, the sunset is an apocalypse, an infallible system of divinity.

Primitive Israel feasts his sight upon the crude might and majesty of the world. The barbaric

instinct in him responds in fear, or in awe, to the lightning's crash, to the thunder's ominous roar, to the rush and the rage of the winds, to the wrath and the violence of the clouds; and he prostrates his spirit, yet unsoftened by the mild, sweet influences of earth and sky, before El Shaddai, the god of might, a sort of Hebraic Vulcan, the forger of lightnings, the lord of storms, the breeder of woes and pestilence, the god of the frogs and the fleas and the lice that afflicted Egypt and brought disaster upon the dynasty of the Pharaohs. Centuries come and go—centuries fraught with struggle, with pain, with the sorrow of national humiliation; centuries of culture under the illuminating and enlarging touch of Time; centuries of meditation upon the sweet, tender, yearning loveliness of the Psalmist, upon the heroic, the far-resounding, the sublime eloquence of Isaiah, upon the burning denunciations, the valiant optimisms, the high, mystical visions of Ezekiel and Jeremiah and all the mighty hierarchy of the prophets—and then barbaric Israel dies in giving birth to the climacteric man, the sovereign prophet, the master of mankind, who envisaged the world through eyes large with the vision of the Eternal and chastened

and softened by the mild love of His wonderful heart, so that wherever he looked—whether upon the sea or the meadows, upon the lilies or the sheep in the fold, upon the sky flooded with the light of the sun or overcast with clouds, upon the waving corn growing in the field or the bird on the wing; upon the Pharisee, blameless in the law, worshiping in the temple, or the prodigal, redeemed by the bitter disillusionments of sin, wending his weary way home—he beheld the token and the sign of the Father, of the eternal heart, of a love whose bounty is inexhaustible, whose patience never wearies and whose mercy reaches unto and beyond, far beyond, the uttermost and direst needs of His children.

Man is made in the image of God, and just as God creates and ceaselessly recreates the macrocosm, so every soul creates and ceaselessly recreates its microcosm, its lesser, individual, personal world, in which it must live and move and have its being, for weal or woe. The universe is a glorious indefiniteness in its quantity, its compass and its quality. It is infinitely elastic and variable, contracting and expanding with the systolic and diastolic movements of our personality. Its mag-

nitude is the magnitude of our spirit. Its splendor is the splendor of our vision. Its interestingness is measured by the interestingness of our thoughts and our emotions. Its beauty is determined by the fineness and the richness of the rhythms of our touch, our hearing, our sight. Its wonder and its charm are centered in the wonder and the charm of the eye that beholds them. Its God is as God-like as the Godlikeness of our faith, our actions and our prayers. We make and unmake creeds and liturgies and deities as we make and unmake styles in furniture or clothes, as we make and unmake social customs, laws, conventions, manners, modes of literature and styles in art. A creed is a concretion of a soul in an aphorism or a phrase. God, though in Himself a permanence of perfection, is, in relationship to man, an unstable equilibrium. He is susceptible of change, of progress, of development. We begin life with the image of a concrete God in our hearts—the patriarchal, parochial God who comes easily within the compass of the mental and emotional processes of childhood. When the shadows begin to lengthen and deepen, the Eternal loses its definiteness and we can no longer give it “a local habitation and a name.”

It resolves itself into a noble vagueness, a formless essence, a mystery of light and love and beauty.

When one reflects upon the august, creative power of personality—the power to impoverish or enrich, to enlarge or curtail, to magnify or dwarf, to ennoble or stultify the sphere in which it lives and realizes its destiny, a destiny of servitude or kingship—one cannot but wonder why this master force of life and happiness is not the one ultimate and supreme objective of all academic culture and discipline. We train the hand, the eye, the ear, the nerves, the muscles to the point of efficiency and expertness in the accomplishment of given tasks. We train the mind to observe, to think, to concentrate, to remember, to reason. We train, educe and virilize the faculties that will make us able and facile in the performance of special functions—the function of a carpenter, an engineer, an accountant, a merchant, a teacher, a physicist, a chemist, a biologist, a doctor, a lawyer, a clergyman. We graduate from our schools, colleges, post-graduate institutions, units of efficiency, specialists, men who, by the compression of their interests and the precision of their talents, “make

good," to use one of the most detestable phrases of this very commercial age. The economic mechanism turns out a more than satisfactory product in the way of formulated aptitudes. We have energy, speed, accuracy, cleverness—men who are skilled from Alpha to Omega in buying and selling, in tearing down and building up; expert brokers, bankers, lawyers, traders, journalists, politicians, reformers, orators, professors, theologians, preachers. Modern culture, modern business, modern life, is all point and focus. Our civilization is distressingly fractional. We form a vast constituency of economic fragments—efficient, dynamic fragments, but still fragments.

Personality, that marvelous conjunction of force, vision, symmetry, culture, refinement, distinction—that fine conspiracy of body, mind, heart and spirit, of strength and sweetness, of vivacity and repose, of authority and humility in an entire, a masterful manhood—is a phenomenon as rare and infrequent in the communal life of our modern world as are the stars of impressive magnitude in the heavens. Wide spaces separate royal and distinguished personalities from each other, as wide spaces separate the trees of imposing grandeur in

the forest. "Mediocrity" is graven in coarse, bold lines all over the features of modernity. We sum up our time, its ambitions, its ideals, its tastes, its journalism, its drama, its literature, its manners, its canons of success, its standards of worth and ability, its citizenship, with sporadic exceptions, in this pathetic word, pregnant with criticism and with failure—mediocrity. "The age of chivalry is past," and the age of the grand style is vanished. As though conscious of and valiantly protesting against this sad submergence of personality, we strive with heroic energy to conceal the poverty and inefficacy of our spirits under costliness of attire, the hauteur of riches, the swagger born of self-distrust, the infantile histrionics of the poseur and the empty theatricality of our exotic manners. We labor with an ardor worthy of a nobler eventuality to hide our dwarfed figure from the scrutiny of the world by the smartness of our strut and the thin veneer of good form. The inevitable logic of all this concentration of the royal treasures of the spirit in a special faculty, a special task, a special prosperity, is ennui, restlessness, disillusionment, cynicism and failure in its largest and most bitter form.

Our age is superb in its enterprise and magnificent in its physical prowess. It is powerful, intellectual, inventive, splendidly adequate to all things mundane and lavishly gifted in all the utilitarian arts. But with all its subtlety of genius and its vaunted practicality, it has not learned that the accomplishment of highest worth is the accomplishment of personality. It has achieved material wealth, physical prosperity, political democracy, industrial prestige, economic efficiency; but it will not enter into the full measure of the dignity, the opulence and the splendor of its larger inheritance until it goes one step further, until it learns to honor, to reverence and to achieve personality. Personality is the mystic wand that transmutes the raw material of our possessions and the neutral ministries of the world into the mystical treasure of life and vision and felicity. The man who is affluent in the power, the appropriateness and the grace of personality is the only man who is rich with the riches that ennoble, adorn and bless. However victorious a man may appear to others by virtue of the magnitude of his external possessions, he is to himself never greater than the compass and orbit of his own soul.

CHAPTER VI

A NEXUS OF THE TALENTS

A FRIEND was very insistent that Thomas Erskine of Linlathen, Scotland—a lay theologian, who, by the largeness of his faith and the beauty of his character, has had a marked and most salutary influence upon the development of thought within the modern church, both in Great Britain and in America—should accompany him to worship one Sunday morning in order that he might hear a young clergyman who had recently been installed in the parish church, and in whose eloquence and ministry he found keen delight. The divine, yet in the salad days of his ministry, was earnest, fervent and rhetorical in his manner, and the sermon was delivered with verve and a fine abandon, though somewhat rambling in its structure and inconclusive in its logic. On the way home, Erskine was silent, making comment neither on the worship nor the part the young master in Israel

had taken in it. The friend, consumed with a desire to know what Erskine's estimate of the sermon might be, ventured to invade the privacy of his thoughts, saying: "And how did you like the sermon, Mr. Erskine?" "It was quite earnest, Sir," replied Mr. Erskine—"quite earnest, but not after the perfect manner of a sermon; for, you know, one desiderates a nexus."

There is a whole criticism of life in this admirable aphorism of four words. One desiderates a nexus, a point of connection, a center of cohesion. The nexus is a *sine qua non* of mass, of force, of beauty, of felicity. A planet is a planet because of the nexus of its atoms. The rose is a rose because of the nexus of its molecules, and it is the Killarney or the American Beauty because of the cohesion of the peculiar molecules that enter into the constitution of its fragrance and its loveliness. A building, a house, an art institute, a church is architecturally noble and impressive, a delight to the eye, through the cohesion of its details, its composition and its color scheme. Great literature, as well as great architecture, must be endowed with this indispensable virtue of the nexus. The *Iliad* is magnificent, not merely by the charm of

its isolated glories, but, rather, by the cumulative impact upon the imagination of its continuous theme. The Bible finds our emotions because of the elevation and the sweep of its spiritual appeal, because of the majesty of its revelation and the haunting beauty of its style; but it commands our intellect because it is superbly organic, all its parts, though variant in form and in value, cohering in the most epical of all motives, the motive of a divine humanity, of an incarnate God, whether the incarnation be crude and partial, as in Abraham, the aboriginal monotheist, in Elijah, the dark-browed prophet of wrath and denunciation, or complete and consummated, as in the Jesus of history.

If, however, cohesion be an imperious law of stability and grace in a flower, in architecture, in literature, not less is it an imperious law of mastery and well-being in the region of personality. If we would use our talents to the highest advantage, we must bring them into concord, into coalition; we must bring them into unity, into an amicable conjunction in a common center. The elements that constitute personality should not run parallel the one to the other, or along tend-

encies divergent from one another. They should coalesce in us, as do the prismatic colors in the perfect ray of light. They should so mix in us that all the world may rise up and say, "There is a man."

It is strange how obtuse our vision is in regard to all things customary and habitual. We do not value with a sufficient appreciation our common blessings, nor do we regard with a sufficient dread the ills with which we have frequent and familiar contact. It is not until our sight is disturbed that we realize the wondrous graciousness and sweetness of the light of common day. We use every safeguard against the virulence of an occasional epidemic—an epidemic of typhus or yellow fever that may, for a brief season, menace our neighborhood—but we are indifferent to the far more insidious epidemic of the common cold, which never visits us without robbing us of some portion of the treasure of our vitality, and which never leaves us without carrying off in its stealthy hands some measure of our resiliency. We visit upon the vice of theft the penalty of social ostracism and an austerity of judgment absurdly out of proportion to the inconvenience suffered by the

victim, because theft is intermittent and exceptional. But the diminishing word, that may be in its consequences inexpressibly more injurious than the pilfering of gold or of jewels, involves not even the just retribution of social indignation, because the vice of the diminishing word is a vice of such wide and general distribution as to be unimportant and negligible. It is by reason of this tendency in us to miss the emphasis and the significance of the habitual presence, whether it be of strength or weakness, that we entirely ignore, in our studies of the pathology of the spirit, its most insidious and erosive malady, the malady of the lesion of personality, the divorcement of the faculties that work in health and effectiveness only when they work in unity and coöperation.

The masses of mankind utterly fail to convert the great and abounding potentials of well-being and happiness into the rewards of a large and beautiful experience. Poverty is the rule; wealth is the exception. Ignorance is the rule; illumination is the exception. The routine of the task is the rule; the inspiration of the task is the exception. Vulgarity is the rule; refinement is the exception. Ugliness—ugliness of ideals, of tastes,

of circumstances, of morals, of beliefs—is the rule; beauty is, everywhere and in all things, the exception—the rare exception. Life for the multitude is a pathetic mendicancy. We are chiefly rich in the possessions we do not wish, and which are thrust upon us without our seeking and against our will—struggle, strain, neurosis, impecuniousness, insufficiency, the humiliation of failure, the melancholy of success.

This anæmia of life has not its cause and explanation, as many think, in the superficial, obvious faults of temperament, or in the ruthless individualism of modern economics. The Goddess of Bounty, who distributes the rewards due to effort and competency, is punctiliously impartial and democratic. The mines, the forests, the lakes, the seas, the earth, the air, the industries, the banks, the professions are open to all alike, and on equal terms. If it be true that “unto him that hath more shall be given,” it is no less true that the rewards of Fortune wait not upon favor, but upon mastery and performance. The major portion of humanity is not living in strain and tension, in confusion and discomfort, in insufficiency and impecuniosity because of the favoritism or

the parsimoniousness of the world-spirit. The world-spirit is perfectly fair. It can only bestow upon us its blessings, its wealth, its truth, its beauty, its life, its love, its gayety, its serenity of mind and of heart according to our power to be blessed. I think if you and I really want to know why it is that we cut such a poor and shabby figure, why we play so unheroic a part on the stage of life and in the drama of the world, all we have to do is to turn our eyes inward toward ourselves, and to look deeper than our surface faults, our indolences, our inertia of purpose, our dismantling habits. We must look into the profundities of our being. There we shall find the malady in whose slovenly abysses all our woe and gloom and incoherence have their origin and explanation—the malady of the schism of personality, the disjunction of our forces, our faculties, our powers. “A house divided against itself cannot stand.” A man who is rent with schisms at the center of his being, who is riven with the feuds and hostilities of forces that should be harmonious and coöperative, and in whom reason, emotion, passion, will, are in constant controversy and antagonism—that man is doomed to the failure and dethronement that

await all organic lesions, whether they be lesions in state, in church, or in the individual soul.

Life is superbly exhilarating, but it is also a stupendous problem. We cannot command its inmost meanings and its richest responses by going into battle with a segmental self, with body and spirit warring in separateness and disjunction, with the frigid edicts of conscience clashing with the ardors of the flesh, with the light of reason divorced from the passion of the heart. Man is not a body; he is not an intellect; he is not an emotion; he is not a conscience: he is the sum, the synthesis and the unity of all these various factors of his being. And if he wishes to be triumphant in the great battle whose sequent is the more abundant life, and whose reward is happiness, the joy and the delight of living, then he must go into the great controversy in all the splendid, invincible unity of his gifts—an entire personality, a whole and spherical man.

When we study the distinguished and mighty masters of men we always find that it is just this virtue of the nexus, of a complete and concordant unity of personality, that is the common denominator of their power and magistracy. The secret

of the greatness of Bismarck was the entire consecration of his stalwart, though cynical, talents, in all the cohesion of a commanding and imperious personality, to the cause of Germanic unity and the world-regency of Teutonic ideals. The secret of the final victory of Wagner over the sterile traditions of the schools, the musical illiteracy of the world, the squalor of circumstances and the deadening pressure of debt, was the devotion of his noble gifts in a royal concord to achieve a marvelous fusion of the barbaric and the mystical, of the brute and the god, of the earth and the heavens, of mundane song and celestial symphony, in his massive and imposing music-dramas.

The most amazing of all victories, the victory of the idealism, the transcendental ethics, the self-negation, the social promiscuity, the supernal loveliness of Jesus, a victory that emerged out of the very heart of humiliation and catastrophe—how shall we account for this miracle of history if we do not find its reason and its explanation in the splendid unity of the personality of this most masterful and alluring of all the spiritual prophets of humanity? Thought, sensibility, emotion, will, wrought with divine amity in Him a lyric grace

of soul, a harmony of manhood, a perfect music of redemption. Jesus is not the one figure of solitary preëminence in history because of the superlative greatness of any particular talent, the singular luminosity of any specific power. He is not preëminent in the world of intellect. He is not preëminent in the world of action and organization. He is not preëminent in the sublime audacity of His courage, in the fealty of His spirit to the ideal unto its ultimate pains. Latimer gave up his life with a soul unblenched by fear. Socrates stepped into the World of the Unknown with the detachment and abandon of a god. The grandeur of Jesus is that all His faculties had their root, their nexus, in the Infinite. His talents were in accord; they were symphonic. His world-reign is the equation of a personality that finds its center and its unity in God. His beauty is the beauty of a finished synthesis of virtues and of powers. He is the most passionately loved man that ever lived, because of the unique wholeness and symmetry of His spirit. And if we desire to taste the sweets of victory, to revel in the amplitudes of the larger prosperity and to exult in the joy of living, we must make the secret of Bismarck, of

Wagner, of all the masters of mankind, and supremely the secret of the Jesus of history, our own. We must do as they did, live as they lived and work as they worked. We must not meet the world with fragmentary powers and dislocated faculties. We must not confront the Mighty Adversary with our personality in internecine strife. An imperative condition of victory, of the victory of life, is to establish an entente cordiale among the high, imperial powers that rule over the mystic kingdom of the soul.

CHAPTER VII

A FINE EGOTISM

It is as impossible for a man to escape from his ego as it is for the body to escape from its shadow on a moonlight night, or for the sun to escape from the presence and dominion of its photosphere. Wherever we go, we carry self with us. It is the one incontestably real presence—the Priest of Jehovah, or the Priest of Baal, who officiates, in full canonicals and with plenary authority, in all the rites, the functions and the processes of life. In every thought we think, in every deed that emanates from our will, in every aspiration that goes forth from us in prayer, the ego is present as the dynast of good or evil to canonize or to curse. The self is the one sovereign and pontifical force of sacrament or excommunication that dwells in the center of our being and gives its tone and quality to the essence and the mode of our thoughts, our emotions and our actions.

All men are egotists, just as all crows are black and all snow is white. Crows may differ in many ways—in structure, in size, in pugnacity—but they are always black. Flakes of snow may differ—differ in many ways, in weight, in moisture, in size, in conformation—but snow is always white. And men may differ—differ in countless ways, in physique, in complexion, in racial characteristics, in national qualities, in quantity and quality of intellect, in warmth, color and reach of vision, in firmness and pressure of will, in ornateness, vividness and reality of faith—but, saint or sinner, elect or canaille, aristocrat or plebeian, savant or peasant, they are all egotists.

Hampden was an egotist in pitting his faith in a constitutional monarchy against the ideals and the traditions of the political absolutism of his country and his age.

Lincoln was an egotist of the most pronounced type when he confronted his constituents, so generally committed to the economic slavery of the negro, with his thesis, whose corollary was emancipation—"This country cannot survive half free and half slave."

Buddha was an egotist when he gave up the

luxury, the glamour and the influence of his princely patrimony to woo the absolute and to obtain peace of soul amid the silences and the shadows of the forest. Self was so central and mandatory in his philosophy of conduct, and in his theory of divinity, that he desocialized himself in order to become one with the absolute through a progressive liturgy of self-denudation—the denudation of the external self of desire and change, in order that the inner, eternal self might enter into the permanent, the changeless tranquillity of Nirvana.

Jesus is the most stately and superb egotist, as He is the most august figure in all the vast canvas of history. The egotism of Buddha is a poor, starved and negative excellence when measured against the robust, the monumental, the sublime egotism of the Man of Nazareth. The egotism of Jesus was insistent, affirmative, cosmic. Listen to the audacity of His words, an audacity that compels the response of the love and reverence of our hearts because we know it is the audacity of a God who speaks through the lips of a man—

“Take up your cross and follow me!”

“He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.”

"I and the Father are one."

"The Father worketh hitherto and I work."

"I am the light of the world."

"He that followeth me shall have the light of life."

"I am the resurrection and the life."

"The woman saith unto Him, 'I know that Messiah cometh that is called Christ. When He is come He will tell us all things.' Jesus saith unto her, 'I that speak unto thee am He.'"

"Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest."

—What titanic egotism! And yet it was this divine self-exaltation of Jesus that was the stay and the strength of His soul in all the crucial moments of His beautiful, but tragic, career. It sustained Him when He beheld, with a frequency of experience that must have been a bitterness to His ardent, sensitive nature, His light-laden, His love-burdened words spend themselves in vain upon the hardened, inhospitable spirit of the Israel of His day—an Israel ensepulchered in a ceremonial of death beyond the power of any resurrection. It upheld Him through the dark consciousness of the desertion and the defeat, the desolation and the anguish of Gethsemane. It bore Him, in its strong and unreleasing grasp,

undismayed by the fear of pain, the ignominy of failure, the obloquy and the scorn of men, to the great and final oblation, the tragedy of the cross, whose agony became His evangel, whose weakness became His strength, and whose shame became His glory and His coronation. Calvary is the apotheosis of egotism. The Jesus of Galilee was adequate to the stupendous task that devolved upon Him as the Savior of the world because of the divine self-consciousness that merged His spirit with the spirit of the Infinite in a unity that was as sublime in its perfect identity with the essence of the Eternal as it has been and is, and will continue to be, potent in the salvation of men.

It is not to be wondered at that this high virtue of great souls should assume the aspect of a fault in lean and meager natures. The vanity of appearances, the pride of place, the superciliousness of intellectual culture, the strut of power, the ostentation of riches, the arrogance of opinion and the pomp of ancestry—these vulgar and irritating qualities, so obtrusive and of such prodigal distribution among the generality, are not the legitimate offspring of a noble and a fine self-con-

sciousness. They are a bastard brood. They are the ill-featured progeny of a wretched *mésalliance*—the *mésalliance* of a mean soul with opulent fortune, or with imaginary talents. When we place the emphasis of superiority, not upon the worth and dignity of the spirit, but upon things external—upon our estate, our fortune, our fashion, our social importance—we confront the world, not with the proud, impressive air that marks the man who lives in the stately consciousness of a royal self-valuation, but, rather, with the nervous and fumbling insecurity of manner that is the unmistakable sign and confession of an inner self-depreciation. The stress we lay upon our mannerisms, our possessions, our dress, our obese and dazzling materialities, our social exclusiveness, our insouciance, our languid, yawning detachment from all emotions and enthusiasms, is not the expression of egotism. It is the expression of a low vitality, of an impoverished imagination, of a deficient self-reverence.

The passion of separateness, of distinction, is an innate endowment of every man. With the certainty of Fate, if he cannot arrest the attention of the world by the magnitude and pressure

of personality, he will strive to lift himself into visibility through the external and accidental leverages of riches, fortune, or position. Now and again the great spirit, to realize more speedily its ambitions and its dreams, and to overcome obstacles that may be temporarily in its way, will avail itself of the blandishments that command the applause and the admiration of the mediocrities through whom its goal must be reached. There is, however, in this unhappy process no confusion of values. Life is a battle in which the combatant must often make an immediate, provisional surrender of a position in order to accomplish his objective—ultimate and unconditioned victory. The ideal, if it would be operative, must lose somewhat of its static luster, just as the vision of the sculptor loses somewhat of the chaste loveliness of the ideal through attrition with the rough surface of the marble out of whose substance it is being evoked by hammer and by chisel. There are situations where the world is a factor in the problem to be solved, in which egotism for the moment must adopt the ways of the world in order that it may the more certainly and the more speedily conquer the

world and make it tributary to its own purpose and destiny.

Disraeli, in many ways the most fascinating and impressive figure in the political Europe of the nineteenth century, was, in his early years, a poseur and a fop. But as soon as his genius came into its proper inheritance, the posing and the foppery—their purpose served—having been put aside, he dominated Great Britain and, in a large measure, the continental policies of Europe by the cogency and massiveness of his egotism. He reigned among the statesmen of his age a superman, a superman of political sagacity and imperial enterprise.

An ignoble self-love is the root of all evil. Conversely, a fine self-love is the root of all mastery, all princeliness and beauty of character, all enrichment of thought, all enlargement of freedom, all victory and all beatitude. "Gnothi seauton!" "Know thyself!"—this is the commandment of promise of the Delphic oracle. "Take heed unto thyself!"—this is the ultimate wisdom of one of the most energetic spirits and masterful minds of Israel. "Love thy neighbor as thyself!"—this is the final edict of the Deca-

logue, formulated by the greatest legislator that ever lived, by the headmaster of righteousness, by the king whose territorial possessions are bounded, not by mountain ranges, nor by oceans, nor by continents, but by the circumference of the planet and the furthest outposts of mankind.

The mathematical and unfailing equation of a high and critical self-valuation is power and dominion. The drive, the urge, which is of the essence of sovereignty, whatever may be the domain in which the talent operates, has its singular impulse and sustenance in the triune virtue—self-knowledge: self-reverence: self-control. We strike with vigor only when we are confident that the stroke will go to its mark. The talent whose virile dynamic is self-confidence surmounts all obstacles and sweeps with the firm stride of a resistless assurance toward its reward and consummation. The unique, outstanding characteristic of genius is not the height and the breadth and the depth of the faculty it involves, but, rather, the heroism of the self-reliance it incarnates. Carlyle, notwithstanding the rugosity of his style, the violence of his eloquence and the Norse strain in his literary temperament, which eventuated in

the excessive prostration of his spirit before the symbols of might—the Koenig, the Earl, the Elderman—the Vulcans and the Thors of myth and of history—belongs, by the force, the compass and the push of his powerful intellect, with the inmost aristocracy of genius. But, though his gifts were of a royal abundance, he would never have enriched and diverted the world with the illumination and the satire of "Sartor Resartus," with the marvelous visualization of the character and the mission of Cromwell, with perhaps the most vividly dramatic narrative ever written, "The French Revolution," had he not been dowered with a confidence in his gifts that neither neglect, nor poverty, nor rejection, nor valetudinarianism could crush and exhaust.

Many years ago, a young man in his late teens came from a far country to this great, generous, hospitable land, to make his fortune and to carve out his career. He came with a solitary letter of introduction to an obscure person who lived in a village of minor importance situated in an Eastern State. The world to which he came was more than a terra incognita to him. It did not contain within its boundaries one person whom

he knew with even a remote personal knowledge, a single friend to whom he might go with the bewilderingments of youth and the sorrows and depressions of his isolation. He came to this country after a succession of misadventures had wasted the family fortune into nothingness. He left on the further shore all his treasure—the family, the father, the mother, the sisters whom he loved with the vivacity and with the passionateness of love that make the early morning of life so beautiful, so wonderful, so radiant. He came with a pittance in his pocket, with sharp necessity as a companion, but with lavish interior wealth, a vigorous intellect, high ideals, a militant courage, a fine chivalry, a great expectancy and, above all, abundantly endowed with the splendid virtue that is the portion of all kingly men and queenly women—the Attic virtue of self-knowledge, the Hebraic virtue of self-love, the Emersonic virtue of self-reliance. He had faith in his star, the star of his own genius; and it did not fail him. It led him on, step by step, from the loneliness, the friendlessness, the lean fortune, the aridity of the wilderness of the early days to the rich, full blessings of the land of abundance and prosperity. It

bore him on from strength to strength, from honor to honor, from victory to victory, until at last it brought to him an achievement, a fame, a personal distinction, a professional importance and a felicity of life which in their magnitude overshadowed the great expectancy he carried with him, in his heart, to America, as the major splendor of Jupiter overshadows the lesser splendor of the Planet Mars.

The primal virtue in the decalogue of achievement is not the talent, but the egotism of the talent. And it holds this position of primacy among the virtues because, of all excellencies, it is the most dynamic, the most fecund in glorious consequences, in the literature, the art, the liberty, the spiritual vision of superlative worth. We owe the "Paradise Lost" of Milton, the "St. Agnes Eve" of Keats, "The Little Black Boy" of Blake, the "Adonais" of Shelley, the "In Memoriam" of Tennyson, the "Pippa Passes" of Browning, the consummate beauty of Goldsmith's "Vicar of Wakefield," the critical insight and the subtle charm of the Essays of Matthew Arnold, the melodious cadences and the tender grace of "The Daisy" and "The Tryst" of Francis Thompson,

the Symphonies of Beethoven, the Sonatas and the Nocturnes of Chopin, the Oratorios of Mendelssohn, of Haydn, of Handel; the marine paintings of Turner, tremulous with poetic sensibility and aflame with all the hues and tints of earth and sky and sea; the landscapes of Innes, enveloped in an atmosphere of pastoral, mystical loveliness; the larger moral freedom; the more latitudinarian interpretation of the spiritual mysteries; the Magna Carta of King John; the Declaration of Independence; the growing altruism of church and state; and the augmenting humanity of modern economics—we owe all these treasures of the spirit, and innumerable other hereditaments of light and hope, not to the discernment and the appreciation of the multitude who live in the nether world of self-distrust and self-depreciation, but to the noble egotists, of every age and every country, who have been vouchsafed a vision of the good and the true and the beautiful, and who have had such faith in themselves, in their talent, in their gift, in their genius, in their revelation, that they have dared to affirm the vision to be of celestial origin, of celestial author-

ity, of celestial compulsiveness, undaunted by the neglect, the unresponsiveness, the obtuseness, the doubt and the distrust of the world.

CHAPTER VIII

SPHERE OF ACTION

IN the high art of living, sphere plays a part second only in importance to the culture and the impact of the talent. Sphere is to personality what the body is to the spirit. The body does not bring the spirit into being, but it is the medium through which the spirit realizes its intrinsic energy and through which the spirit unfolds toward its consummation, as the mystic essence of the flower unfolds through stem and leaf until it comes to its finality in the grace and fragrance of its blossom.

It would be an audacity to affirm that spirit does not exist in the abstract. I think, however, we can justly say, notwithstanding the metaphysic of our day—a metaphysic buoyant with an idealism that outsoars the heavens—that all we really know of spirit is as it defines itself in and reveals itself through the forms of matter, and, supremely,

as it incarnates itself in and utters its ineffable ministries of life and light and love through the dear mystery and the wondrous mechanism of this mortal body of our flesh. The body, on this earth plane, is the soul's sphere of culture, of development, of action. But the soul, because of its infinity, because of its inherent tendency to fuller utterance and larger expression, cannot contain itself within any specific form. The spirit of vapor is not content to abide permanently in the form and mode of vapor. It condenses, by the law of its being, under certain conditions, into the cloud; and the cloud is restless until it finds expression in the form of rain, which, falling to the earth, finds its way, as if by some cosmic instinct, to the spring, and from the spring to the brook, and from the brook to the river, and from the river to the capacious arms of the sea. The spirit of light cannot find peace within the far-sweeping boundaries of the sun. As if inspired by a sense of larger and diviner destiny, it bounds, with a great joy in its heart, into the abysses of space, to carry illumination, warmth and gladness to the distant planets—to Uranus, Neptune, Saturn, Mars—and to the earth, where it unfolds

the measureless bounty secreted in its diaphanous substance in myriad forms of life, of sentiency and of beauty.

As Nature abhors a vacuum, so, likewise, she abhors containment. She needs boundaries, but she insists that they shall be elastic and dissoluble. She frets against all limitations that arrogate to themselves the rights of permanency. However huge, magnificent, enlightened, beautiful the form, the system, the constitution, the civilization, the religion may be, Nature will not countenance the indignity of a permanent imprisonment. The urgent tendency of the spirit of Nature is a tendency outward, to ampler utterance and to expression in richer and finer modes, to the attainment of ever-increasing empire.

Now, this imperious need of the world-spirit for a sphere of expression and action beyond its own immediate boundaries is also the imperious need of that fragment of the world-spirit which we name "personality." Every individual, whatever may be the wealth or poverty of his talents, the character and the complexion of his genius, is subject to the law and the urgency of sphere. Through the erosion of habitual indolence and

supineness of will, one may approximate the immobility of death; but so long as the body feels and the mind thinks, one cannot attain to a state of absolute inertia. The talent, the temperament, the personality is not sufficient unto itself. It cannot swathe itself in its acquisitions and hibernate through the years, living on its past experiences and felicities, as in the winter-time the bear hibernates in a mountain cave, living on the surplus flesh it has stored up from its foragings during the more benign seasons of the year. By a necessity more imperative than his will, by a compelling instinct of life in him, man must transcend the confines of his own personality and ensphere himself in a world whose worth and quality, whose wealth and winsomeness will be largely determined by his habits and propensions. He must find a habitation for his talents beyond the periphery of self, with the same insistency that the tender melodies that swayed and surged in the heart of Schubert had to find an expression beyond his ephemeral emotions in the notations of symphony or song.

But, if conjunction with a sphere external to ourselves is a necessity of our being, the kind and

character of the sphere in which the talent must operate and fulfill its destiny is, to a large extent, within the power and compass of our own choice. This choice is the most critical—the choice most fraught with the possibilities of conservation or waste, of power or weakness, of well-being or disaster, of happiness or wretchedness, of the order or incoherence of life—that we have to make in the course of our career. If the plenitude, the cogency, the beauty of personality, is the fundamental condition of the victorious life, then, almost coördinate with it in importance is the condition of a fine and amicable articulation of personality with its specific kingdom, its native environment, its congenial task and its proper avocation.

An effective, radiant life is the logical equivalent of a succession of happy adjustments. An ineffective, a shadowed life is the inevitable consequence of a succession of misadjustments. Where one man fails because of paucity of gift, a thousand men fail because of the incommiscibility of the gift and the element in which it labors. Where one man succeeds by reason of the sheer momentum and cohesion of personal force,

a thousand men endowed with modest parts succeed because, through a happy accident, or a subtle intuition of their *métier*, they have accomplished a perfect rapport of the talent with the task. There is, no doubt, an æsthetic pleasure in wearing clothes of a fine texture, but our comfort is more dependent upon the fit than upon the costliness of our attire. So we may find a satisfaction to our pride in the mass or the conspicuousness of our endowments, but unless our talent works with comfort, unless it harmonizes with its avocation, it will not work with efficiency, with a prowess that conquers, with a great gladness in its heart, with a constant progression toward the heights of richest self-manifestation.

Richelieu, when he revolved in his predestined orbit, the orbit of diplomacy and statesmanship, shone with a Jupiterian volume and brilliancy of light, but when, courting the Muse, he sought to rival Corneille in song, his efforts resulted in worse than failure. They were grotesque. His song was not the song of the cuckoo, an insubstantial, fairy thing, a voice, a mystery; it was the broken, unmusical chatter of a sparrow. When I read, many years ago, this anecdote of the attempted

flight of the very mundane genius of Richelieu into the mystical world of song, with its consequent disaster, it served the purpose for which it was written. It touched the passing moment with a mild amusement. But as, in more serious mood, I reflect upon this foible, this vainglorious ambition, this puerile adventure of the great Richelieu, who was the master of France when France was mistress of the world, this bit of gossip from the memoirs of St. Simon takes on the dignity of an apocalypse. What a deplorable waste of life, of talent, of power, of character, of pride, of serenity of mind and joy of heart, is forever going on; what a Niagara of waste forever rushing on and on toward catastrophe and nothingness, just because the gift that might achieve, with a pleasant fluency of effort, distinction in the modest sphere to which by the nature of its strength and limitations it belongs, under the impulsion of an overweening ambition essays to master a world whose secrets are hopelessly beyond its understanding, and whose burdens are immeasurably beyond its strength! The professions and the arts have been a Hall of Fame for the chosen of the Lord, but, alas! these battlefields of highest

honors are, for the most part, graveyards where the ambition of too great temerity has found its cruel doom and its swift interment.

All effort is lost effort if there be not in the talent a sufficient potential energy to overcome the resistance and to lift the burden which the talent has chosen as its task and problem. If we would conserve strength and contend with the fire of a great joy in our heart and the elation of mastery in our attack, we must not go forth to battle with the small arms of the single talent against a foe who can only be subjugated by arms of swifter action or of larger caliber, by the cavalry of the two talents or the artillery of the five talents. The spear of Saul is for Saul. The sling is the weapon for David. Had David gone out from the hosts of Israel panoplied in the unmanageable armor and overburdened with the spear of the stalwart Saul, to measure his prowess against the giant of Philistia, the song that would have come down to us from that memorable day would have been a dirge of defeat. The song rolls down the ages a mighty chant of victory, because the lad fought with the weapon of a lad, and not with the weapon and in the

armor of a man. In the world of the spear, the valiant, young warrior of Israel would have been conquered by the spear. In the world of the sling, he was not only master of the sling, but he was also conqueror of the spear.

A poet bids us "hitch our wagon to a star," but unless our gift be of great massiveness and momentum, it would be prudent to connect it with a more manageable motive power. The gift of average dimensions would not shine with the star's luster. Its career would be a chaos, and its destiny a doom. It would not be saved by the star's brilliance; it would be swept to disaster by the star's rush and velocity. It is an exquisite sanity that finds a high accomplishment, an ample reward and a sweet contentment in the happy and effective union of a minute talent with a modest task. The genius of Burns was minute. His gifts were not of the Homeric order. An Iliad of large dramatic action, of histrionic measures, of far-rolling cadences and resounding rhythms, could not find room to gestate and unfold within the poetic genius of Burns, which was a genius as meager in its compass as it was exquisite in its fiber and its quality. The art of Burns is per-

fect of its kind, and it more than compensates for its lack in range and mass by the consummateness of its form, the witchery of its melody and the universality of its appeal. Homer enjoys the dubious distinction of being the most honored and the least known of the poets. He rules from a high throne over the noble, the elect constituency of the enlightened, but his subjects, though proud of their king, are few, and his kingdom small, almost to the point of extinction. The flight of Homer is too high, too sustainedly in the grand manner, for us. He awes us with his habitual majesty and congeals us with the austerity, the remoteness of his carriage. We give the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* the position of primacy in our library and in our academic reverence, but we do not know them; we do not consort with them as with familiar friends and beloved companions. Burns, however, thinks and feels and loves on the plateau where the commonalty dwells. He is one of us. He is one with us, and we are one with him in the dear cohesion of kindred experiences. Coleridge says, in one of his ponderous essays—essays not sufficiently known in this age of ours, with its cursory glance and its impatient atten-

tion—"I believe in the inspiration of the Bible because it finds me, and finds me over a larger surface than all other books combined." Now, this is the characteristic of the art of Burns, the characteristic of every art, however modest, however microscopic it may be. It is the characteristic of the art of Albert Chevalier in his costermonger sketches: it is the characteristic of the art of Yvette Guilbert in her chansons of the seventeenth century—not less than it is the characteristic of the art of Burns. It finds us. It makes us one with itself in a warm and intimate community of thoughts, emotions, passions, of life and laughter and joy and sorrow and love. Chevalier brought a rare sagacity to the contemplation and the measurement of his gifts. He ascertained, through a frank and critical experimentation with his talents, that the mechanism of his genius was as small as it was delicate and subtle. He ceased to aspire to achieve renown in the more formidable drama, in the portrayal of Hamlet, Macbeth, Iago, Malvolio. He dedicated his slight, but exquisite, gifts to the halls, to the costermonger, to the unveiling of the costermonger's heart—his tenderness, his fealty, his humor, his pathos, his

devotion—and the result of this happy liaison of a slender talent with a minute task has been the attainment of an art of ultimate finish and loveliness. The charm, the beauty, the perfection, born of restraint and circumscription, that make the art of Chevalier memorable, are to be found, with an abounding fullness, also in the artistry of Yvette Guilbert, whose genius is atomic rather than planetary. I cannot think of her in the characters of Elsa, Isolde, Brünnhilde. One cannot associate her slender voice, her dainty manners, with the stormy divinities of Valhalla. Her art is the antithesis of the barbaric art, the muscularity, the Amazonian energy and fuss, the blare and the violent eroticism of the heroines of Wagner; but there is more of beauty, more of pure and final charm, in her petite gift, working in sweet conspiracy with its infinitesimal sphere, than I have ever seen achieved by the most famed singers in the immortal tetralogy of Wagner. Every nerve in my being has risen in protest and rebellion as I have listened, through many tempestuous hours, to these goddesses of modern opera shriek out their woe, their terror, their desolation, their hysteria and their love. But Yvette Guilbert, by the ethereal

4

gentleness of her voice and the sweet reticence of her manner, lifts me into a world of pure delight. She finds me. She finds you. She finds us all. She finds the whole world. Her art is consummate. It is minute in its capacity, but it is universal in its reach, its persuasion, its command.

I have gone with particularity into the study of the atomic gift working with ease, with delight, with large and rich reward, with a splendid victoriousness in its small world, in order that you and I may avoid the maelstrom of inordinate ambition, which sucks down into its ruthless and remorseless deeps such a wealth of talent, of faculty, of temperament, power, joy and hope. It is of vital importance, so far as the triumph and radiancy of life are concerned, that we confront the world with a noble egotism and a large expectancy. Water does not, under the compulsion of its inherent energy, rise above its source; nor does the performance of life transcend in elevation, in dignity, in importance, in fruitfulness, the ideal which is its origin, its motive power and its pattern. The great success, which, as I have said, is not measured by pelf, by prestige or by renown, but by the fullness, the richness, the mas-

tery and the joy of life—the great success is not a fortuity. It is not a surprise. It is the product of a strong, vivacious talent working in conjunction with a congenial and adequate sphere. We must not smother personality under a mountain of ambition which is not the less deadly because it is flamboyant. On the other hand, we must not smother personality by confining it in a sphere which has in it no power of expansion, no room for growth. The world to which we have assigned our talents, and to which we have committed our career and our destiny, should be endowed to infinity with the property of expansion. The minute gift is minute only by contrast and by juxtaposition, as the earth is small only when measured against the magnitude of the sun. Viewed in relation to its potentialities, the least thing in this world is a matter of ineffable significance. A grain of sand upon the seashore affects the balance of a planet, the poise of the solar system. The word of a seer may contain within it a dynamic that will dethrone kings, overturn empires and consume venerated political and religious institutions of society in the raging fires of anarchy and revolution. The most diminutive

talent may contain within its hidden and mysterious deeps achievements of inconceivable splendor, victories of superlative importance. And, therefore, spaciousness should be an unfailing property of our work, our task, our avocation, our profession, our art, our unique and personal kingdom. It should grow with the growth, expand with the expansion and, with a gracious accommodation, recede before the advancing steps of our talent, the enlargement of our ideals and the constant increment of our personality. The stars must have space, ample space, in which to revolve toward their far-off goal; and the talent—your talent, my talent, every one's talent—must have space, shoreless space, in which, progressively, to unfold toward its completion, its destiny of divine perfection. Happy is that man whose genius finds inspiration and delight in the congenial air and habitation of its chosen sphere. Happier yet is he whose talent is inwrought with a sphere which contains within itself room for the realization of a large and noble manhood, for a full and fine felicity of life.

CHAPTER IX

IMPORTANCE OF ATMOSPHERE

As the earth is engirdled by an atmosphere—its inseparable companion and servant, the mighty wizard who takes the crude energy consigned to the earth by the sun and transmutes it, through friction and attrition, into light and heat—so the soul of man is ensphered in an atmosphere, an aura, an ethereal substance wrought of the spirit's essence and the stuff of its environment, which mediates between the inner and the outer world very much as the nervous system mediates between the world of consciousness and the world of matter. The speech of the soul is too fine and mystical to be understood by matter: the speech of matter is too coarse and inarticulate to be understood by the soul; and so the nervous system, which is bilingual, conveys the wishes and the motivities of the soul to matter and interprets the sense impacts of matter for the clearer comprehension of the soul.

The optic nerve is a mediator, a buffer, between the consciousness of light and the external vibrations which reach it from sun, moon, star, or the artificial media of illumination contrived by the intelligence of man. Likewise, this mystical force that we call "atmosphere" is constituted neither altogether of the essence of personality nor altogether of the substance of the world, but is, rather, a mid-world, a composite of both elements. It is the coalescence of the emanations of personality with the emanations of the environment in which personality finds a habitation. It is a sort of vaster nervous system, connecting the spirit with its proper and particular cosmos—a psychic exchange, through which we unconsciously communicate with the world, and through which the world automatically communicates with us.

It is impossible to define this self-atmosphere, as it is impossible to define spirit, or to define matter. The forces of ultimate significance are all vague—not with the vagueness born of shadow, but with the vagueness born of excess of light. Life is vague. Beauty is vague. Righteousness is vague. God is vague. And yet all these vague forms of consciousness are splendidly real. So

IMPORTANCE OF ATMOSPHERE 93

also the nebulous envelope, the aura we carry with us wherever we go, as the earth carries its encircling vapors, is, notwithstanding its nebulosity, our intimate and boon companion. Its reaction upon the inmost essence of us, our thoughts, our ideals, our character, is as unfailing as are the reactions of sky and temperature and environment upon our dress, our habits and our moods. The functions which devolve upon it as an intermediary between the spirit of man and the outer world that is forever pressing upon it with incessant impacts—impacts agreeable and disagreeable, fine and coarse, sweet and bitter, ennobling and degrading, divine and satanic—are of supreme importance in relation to the paramount aim of life, our prosperity, our poise and our felicity.

What a chaos, what a misery, what a turbulence life would be if the world, with all of its dissonances, its sharp angles and its irritations, were in immediate contact with the inmost self of us—if there were no buffer kingdom between the principality of our soul and the vast, unkempt, barbaric, stormy host of Vandals, Goths, Visigoths and Huns which invade us from all sides and which are a constant menace to the order, the

tranquillity and the peace of our spirits! The world abounds in forces of friction and unrest. It is dishearteningly rich in irritants—irritants of stupidity, of impertinence, of crudity, of coarseness, of criticism, of obtrusion. It abounds with unpleasant circumstances, with undesirable contacts, with impoverished, angular, fretting personalities. Death would be a bagatelle in comparison with a life continually subject to the indiscriminate invasion of the mobocratic forces of the outer world.

Pope bewails man's inhumanity to man, and it is a real evil, of which we are all vividly and painfully conscious. There is, however, an evil more insidious, more treacherously corrosive of life, more potent in the suffocation of laughter, in the smothering of the joy of the heart—an evil which we ignore because it is so invisible, so sly, so furtive, in its operation—the evil of humanity's inhumanity to man. An individual now and again, at great intervals, rises up among the sovereigns of the political world, or the masters of the industrial world, in whom the autocratic principle incarnates beyond measure, and who rules with arrogant scepter and ruthless power. This

IMPORTANCE OF ATMOSPHERE 95

insolent lordship is very evidential, and, because evidential, it is easily and swiftly amenable to criticism and restraint. But the tyranny of humanity—the tyranny of the many who hate and persecute the few who love and have the fortitude to proclaim the truth; the tyranny of the many who have not and who envy and harass the few who have and who have what they have through a ceaseless self-denial, an unyielding economy and a zeal that has been a spendthrift only in the commodities of strength and of ambition; the tyranny of the many who, sodden with conventionalized iniquity and legalized impurity, have striven to overwhelm with scorn and contumely the few heroic men and women in every age who have sought the imperial sanctions of conduct in the vision of the soul rather than in the drab and seared conscience of tradition; the tyranny of the many who, in society, church and state, in the domain of literature, the drama, the fine arts, exalt and canonize mediocrity while they neglect and consign to bitter obscurity the few great spirits who by virtue of their clearer and serener vision, their high and regal endowments, are called of God to be their prophets and the forerunners of a better day; the

tyranny of the many who, as the Esquimau finds delight for his palate in putrescent blubber, seek for an aliment corresponding with the perversion and degeneracy of their moral instincts in the morbidities, the salacities, the scandals, the evil odors and corruptions of the social organism, and who, by their immitigable vulgarity—the vulgarity of their ideals, the vulgarity of their standards of life and well-being, the vulgarity of their manners, the vulgarity of their worship, their heaven and their God—strive, with a diabolic persistency, to make the world a pessimism and life a crucifixion to the high-born of the spirit who love the things that pertain to order, to beauty and to good taste—this tyranny, though more hostile to the world's well-being than the tyranny of the individual, we must submit to, like slaves, because of its magnitude and because of its universality.

If this world be a wilderness to the multitude because of the hard, dynastic egoism of a sporadic individual—a kaiser, a financier, a magnate of any kind, in any domain—it would be, if its malign forces were left unhampered and unrestrained, a purgatory to the elect, who have to bear not only the pains incident to our common humanity, but

IMPORTANCE OF ATMOSPHERE 97

also the more exquisite, the more excruciating pains which are the sad privilege of greatness—the pains which feast only on dainty food, on fine nerves, beautiful ideals and delicate sensibilities; the fair pains with which alone superior excellence can appease the remorseless hate and envy of humanity. And yet, though living amid this wild chaos and confusion of the world, the great spirits go on their way undismayed and unconquered, with their loins well girt and the calm, sweet light within them shining with untroubled loveliness and undiminished brilliancy. They are in the world, though not of it. Wherever they go, they carry with them a protecting medium of defense, an armor of light, an atmosphere whose first function is critical and inhibitive, which weighs and measures, by inexorable standards, every thought, every suggestion, every influence that seeks entrance to the inner citadel of the soul, which, with an authority insistent and absolute, forbids the nearer approach of the shadowed forms that breathe only to blight and that touch only to consume, and which, in the name of the Master, welcomes the ministers of light who come with benedictions in their hands, to enrich and to bless.

This critical, inhibitive function of the atmosphere, luminous and protective, that defends, as with sword and buckler and shield, the royal spirits of mankind, no doubt seems mystical and abstract and not quite consonant with that hard, material instinct in us that labors unceasingly to confine the actual and the real to what can be measured and weighed and touched. Yet the symbolism of the defensive aura appears in every literature. We behold it in the Iliad, where the favorites of the gods, in the crucial emergencies of battle, are wrapped in a cloud which protects them from the spear of their masterful and pressing foe. We find it in the Old Testament, in the story of the three young heroes of Israel protected by invisible armor from the destroying flames of the fiery furnace. We read of it in the New Testament, in the record that reveals to us Jesus, after the declaration in the synagogue of His Messianic mission and function, passing through the angry and clamorous throng at Nazareth unseen and unharmed. And we have a demonstration of its reality in the more cogent, the more indisputable testimony of personal experience. Only occasionally, when there is some breach, some gap

IMPORTANCE OF ATMOSPHERE 99

in the continuity of our engirdling aura, does the world, with its anarchies and distempers, invade the inner sanctuary of the spirit. Then, for the moment, our emotions are swept away in the "sturm und drang," the fury and the tempest of the world. We are lost in and dominated by the confusions of anger, of hate, of lust, of depression, of despair. But, for the most part, our soul moves along the way of life with proud mien and unfaltering stride, its vision unperturbed, its virtue unmenaced, its serenity unruffled. The soul moves forward to its destiny, with the exception of rare and unusual moments, quite unconscious of the turbulence, the friction and the riot by which it is invested and which ever seek to undermine its rectitude, its dignity and its calm. It is immune to the coarse, defiling touch, the asperity, the impurity and the grossness of the world. And it is immune because of its atmosphere of high thoughts and fair emotions, which automatically, without the intervention of consciousness or the expenditure of volition, rejects the evil—all that is incongruous with the fineness and the purity of its own nature—and gives entrance only to the beautiful and the good, to the luminous forces

that are agreeable with its own essence and congenial to the divinities within the soul.

Again, it is, I think, in this vague mid-world of the spirit's atmosphere, in this psychic drapery woven out of the effluences of the soul and the exhalations of the outer world, that we find the personal equation, the differential principle that gives tone, color and separateness to the mystic influence of personality. In the fundamentals of our being, in the central essence of us, we are all wrought out of the same cosmic stuff and endowed with similar faculties, varying greatly in degree and quantity, but perfectly homogeneous in property and function. However distinguishable, by color and by structure, the body of the Arab may be from the body of the East Indian, or the Anglo-Saxon, in basic corporeality they constitute a unit without variation and distinction. However man may differ from man in vividness and vivacity of the senses, in mass and quality of intellect, in largeness and intensity of emotion, man is bound up with man in the glorious solidarity of the essential powers of his spirit.

Reason is not one power in a logician and another and distinct power in a child, or a man

IMPORTANCE OF ATMOSPHERE 101

of untutored and undisciplined intellect. Reason is reason, whether its habitation be the mind of Hamlet or Verges, the mind of Socrates or Jack Falstaff, the mind of Spinoza or Paracelsus, the mind of Ignatius de Loyola or Martin Luther. The mythopœic faculty of the highly imaginative child is essentially one with the mythopœic faculty of Homer and Æschylus and Plato. The difference is wholly one of scope and the variant substance in which the mythopœic genius works. Love is a generic emotion that knits all the races, all the peoples, all the individuals of every age and country into a common and indivisible humanity and makes this habitable earth, notwithstanding the surface differences of races, nationalities and individuals, a vast fraternity of mankind. Beauty, though bewilderingly various in its standards, its manifestations, in the range and kind and ardor of the responses it evokes, is an impartial possession of humanity the world over, from pole to pole, from furthest east to remotest west. It lurks an equality of endowment, though a boundless inequality in the properties of compass and fineness, in the touch, the taste, the sight of the Patagonian savage and the most

highly finished type of man that modern civilization has evolved. The savage looks upon the diurnal miracle of the rising sun and, with an awe more emotional than intellectual, greets the magnificent spectacle of the dawn of day with an inarticulate "Ah!" upon his lips. You and I meet this stupendous marvel of power and splendor with a more elaborate response, with a more articulate adoration. The wonder in our heart is more complex than the wonder in the heart of the savage. To the savage the sunrise is the wonder of physical emotion, the wonder of surprise, the wonder of the unknown. To us it is the wonder of intellectual emotion, the wonder of divinity, the wonder of the revelation of the power, the wisdom, the majesty, the excellency and the glory of the Eternal. Yet the instinct of beauty in him is one with the instinct of beauty in us.

If there be homogeneity and unity in the fundamental faculties and powers of mankind, not less is the world a flawless communism in the distribution of its wealth of treasures. Heat is heat: light is light: the sun is a sun: the star is a star: the sea is a sea: the rose is a rose: the fact, whatever may be its nature or kind, is a fact; and truth,

IMPORTANCE OF ATMOSPHERE 103

whatever may be its form or expression, is truth, the world over, east or west, north or south, in every continent—in Europe, in Asia, in Africa, in Australia, in North and South America. Nature, with her retinue of sights—her symphonies and her cacophonies, her apparel of glories and wonders, her systems, her laws, her forces, her epiphanies, mysteries and concealments—is everywhere, and to all men, the same nature, though she speaks a language varying with our capacity to understand her ministries and to interpret her mysteries.

If, however, the elemental gifts, if reason, if love, if the instinct of beauty are the indistinguishable possessions of all men, and if Nature is always and everywhere the same equality of facts, the same unity of forces, the same solidarity of laws and systems, the same vast organism of bounties, how are we to account for the variations of sensibility, of vision, of character, of power, of dignity, of refinement, of charm that we discern among men? How is it that Haeckel interprets the mystery of creation, of life and sentiency, of consciousness and self-consciousness, in the terms of matter; that Spinoza interprets it in the terms

of spirit; that Fichte interprets it in the terms of the ego; that St. Augustine interprets it in the terms of an infinite, transcendental personality; and that Herbert Spencer interprets it in the terms of an energy not ourselves, not only beyond our present comprehension, but, by its very nature, unknowable? Why is it that the subtle and the faultlessly logical intellect of John Stuart Mill, after pondering upon and weighing the facts, the evidences, the achievements of the religion of Jesus, terminates in a Christianity that is purely ethical, without any element of the supernal and the miraculous, while the equally subtle and faultlessly logical intellect of John Henry Newman, pondering upon and weighing the same facts and evidences and achievements, terminates in a Christianity that overflows with the supernatural, with miracle—in a religion that not only exalts, but that exults in miracles, in the miracles of Jesus, the miracles of the saints of the church, and the miracle of miracles, the constant and continuing miracle, the crown and consummation of miracle, the miracle of the mass?

How do we account for the immense spaces that separate the philosophy of life, the character, the

faith, the poetry and the art of Browning from the philosophy of life, the character, the faith, the poetry and the art of Maurice de Guerin? They were both poets, both splendidly intellectual, both men of vision, of fortitude, of rare nobleness of nature. Yet how different they are in their message and in the quality of their manhood! Browning speaks to us the word that is masculine, virile, bracing. His message comes to us as in the summer-time a cold wave comes from the Arctic region freighted with ozone, laden with vigor, with the buoyancy and joy of life. On the other hand, Maurice de Guerin speaks to us with sweetness of cadence, with the beauty that inheres in the gentle and devout imagination, with a grace that lingers, with a pathos of mortality shadowing all he thinks and feels and utters. The thought of Browning is stalwart and, to use Milton's splendid word, robustious. The thought of de Guerin is exquisite, but fragile and valetudinarian. What, then, is the secret of these differences, these variations? Why is one man intellectual and invertebrate, while another is intellectual and self-reliant? Why is one man's morality hard, rigid, Pharisaical, censorious, while another man's mo-

rality is tender, knightly, chivalrous and spacious? Why is one man's religion a sterile dogma, a system of definitions, a chain of formulæ, a convention without heart, a liturgy without emotion, while another man's religion is big with all the beautiful bigness of life and love and joy and freedom and eternity?

These differences are, I am sure, to a large extent a matter of atmosphere. The personal equation takes on its special form and hue in the aura of our souls. In this sensitive, impressionable medium, that enfolds the spirit of man as the albumen enfolds the yolk of an egg, are stored up and secreted all our thoughts, our emotions, our passions, our predilections, our doubts, our fears, our hates, our loves, all the inheritance of race and of nationality, all the qualities, tendencies, ideals, instincts, proclivities, habits, attractions and aversions that constitute our patrimony as Englishman, American, German, Frenchman, as Buddhist, Mohammedan, Jew or Christian, as Roman Catholic or Protestant. As the sun's ray assumes the color—green, or purple, or blue, or orange, or violet, or red—of the pane of glass through which it must come to reach our eye, so the

IMPORTANCE OF ATMOSPHERE 107

world, with its infinite variety of content, its sights and its sounds, its morals, its arts, its customs, its laws, its functions, creeds, faiths and worships, assumes the tone, the quality, the strength, the limitation, the light and the shadow of our specific atmosphere, our peculiar aura, our personal equation.

The fundamental personality, the radical man, the deep, inner man in every one of us, is universal, democratic, cosmopolitan, catholic in faith and conduct. It is the atmospheric man that is insular in his nationality, provincial in his habits of thought and action, parochial in his churchmanship and sectarian in his faith. How important, then, it is that we should, by persistent and varied culture, enrich and refine this mystical atmosphere which reacts with such insistent pressure, with such subtly formative touch upon our inmost self, our essence, our character, the substance and the quality of our being! Time is not permitted us in the brief tenancy of earth's day to wholly recreate the aura of our soul, to completely emancipate ourselves from the dwarfing tyranny of our prejudices, our insularities, our pettinesses, our inherited racial antagonisms, our national animosities and our spiritual antipathies;

but we can accomplish much if we wish and strive in the way of the transfiguration of the personal equation. By constant self-scrutiny and self-criticism, by incessant meditation upon "whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are holy, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report," by the redemptive contacts of fine and fastidious friendships, by habitual communion with the sovereign spirits of literature, of music, of painting, of sculpture, living and dead, the poets of form and of color and of sound, the prophets of the cult of beauty, "the master lights of all our seeing," by ceaseless aspiration toward the heights, by constant prayer for perfection in the silence and the solitude of the sanctuary of the soul, by the perpetual oblation of self upon the altar of high thoughts and in the temple of noble deeds, by the daily practice of a life royal, large, considerate, fine, we can, progressively, transfigure our atmosphere into an abode of light worthy of its immortal guest, the soul, the eternal self in us—one with the glory of God and one with the blessings and the burdens of humanity.

CHAPTER X

LARGER VISION

IF we should estimate life by its visible and manifest performances, the sum of its importance would be rather insignificant and not at all assuaging to our pride. To the cursory glance, the average life is wholly without distinctive consequence. It is, no doubt, a force in the great human mechanism, as a screw is a force in the structure of a locomotive, as a star, however feeble its light, is a force in the illumination of the night; but when viewed in isolation and regarded as a separate entity, it is a force without luster, without paramount meaning, without uniqueness of character and function. The great hosts of humanity are individuals without individuality. In the drama of life they play no leading part. They personate no outstanding character. They rank with the supernumeraries who flutter about the stage in order to create an illusion of action and

to afford a neutral background against which the histrionism of the play may define itself, but whose entrances are without comment and whose exits are without observation. They are uniform. They wear the livery of the commonplace.

It has been said, with a touch of scorn, but with entire fidelity to fact, that England is a nation of shopkeepers. England, of course, has her poets, her artists, her statesmen, her prophets. She is the foremost nation of the world in power of intellect, in social vision, in political honor, in the chivalry of arms, in urbanity of manners, in the art of living. Yet, notwithstanding her high excellence among the peoples of the world, she is a nation of shopkeepers. Mammon is her over-lord and trade her genius. Trade, however, is not prolific in deities. One does not go to the Board of Trade, to the Stock Exchange, or to the marts of London, Paris, Berlin, New York or Chicago, in search of the immortals. The immortals do not make the shop their habitation. The shop, as a rule, is hostile to eminency of personality and inimical to the qualities that make for notability of nature and primacy among men of fine feeling.

It was a saying of Bismarck that Germany is a nation of servants. What does this criticism signify if it does not mean that in the opinion of one of its great masters Germany is a nation of mediocrities, a nation whose masses are as indistinguishable in their individual constituents as particles of star dust are indistinguishable the one from the other. Germany has its hierarchy of the illustrious. Out of the crude, harsh deeps of it have emerged noble and commanding spirits. The world is an incalculable debtor to German culture, to German art, to German scholarship, to German efficiency—to Helmholtz, Liebig and Koch, for the advancement of science; to Kant, Fichte, Hegel and Eucken, for adventures into the elusive world of metaphysic, a world of bewildering vagueness and of haunting charm; to Goethe, Schiller and Schelling, for the enrichment of the world of letters; to Curtius, Mommsen and Neander, for the enlargement of our historic consciousness; and to Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, Handel, Mendelssohn and Wagner, for the sonatas, the concertos, the symphonies, the masses, the oratorios, the operas that have brought culture and delight to the ever-growing numbers who find in

music a ministry of life and beauty of incomparable value. But these mighty ones constitute an extremely limited oligarchy. Germany at large is a nation of servants, of regimentalized units, of mechanized artisans, clerks, porters, masons, carpenters, hewers of wood and drawers of water. It is a nation of menials, and it is a nation of menials because the spirit of Germany, when we regard it en bloc, is a spirit that, despite the might of its physical impact, is lacking in the definition of individuality, in the distinctiveness of personality that redeems life from its heavy burden of obscurity and inconsequence.

But as humanity at large must share with England the stigma of being a nation of shopkeepers, so it must share with Germany the diminishing criticism of her one monumental man. Here and there over the wide spaces of humanity a soul defines itself in vision by virtue of its mass, its power, its luminosity, its loveliness. For the greater part, however, we are shopkeepers, servants, nondescripts, human units, lost and submerged in the crowd.

And yet this lamentable collapse of life's values, this dishonoring pessimism that condemns all hu-

man aspirations and efforts to futility and nothingness, is an illusion, a fallacy of the superficial vision. We carry within us the incontrovertible consciousness of the greatness of our own soul, the dignity of our own talent, the eternal importance of the function that we have to fulfill in the social economy, and the inestimable value of our life in its bearing upon the world. We feel and know that we are, each one of us, "just a little lower than the angels and crowned with glory and honor." We feel and know, with a knowledge indefectible because it is the witness of the divine spirit in us, that there is in us, in each one of us, in the least visible and significant of us, "the power of an endless life." The spirit knows its own divinity and, by some occult divination that operates far below the thoughts, emotions, ideals and experiences that float and eddy and are driven hither and thither on the surface of consciousness, recognizes the glory of its celestial inheritance. We are—not one here and there, but each of us and all of us—kings and priests before God. We belong to a knighthood whose patent is from eternity and of whose dignity and honors the accidents of time

cannot bereave us, the supernal knighthood of the heirs of God. We take our barony directly from the hand of the King of Kings, and its prerogatives are indefeasible. The inheritance of the lowliest mendicant is one in magnitude and richness with the inheritance of the most exalted potentate, the most imperial of the sovereigns of the earth. Our possessions touch infinity on every side. Our empire is vast with all the life, the truth, the beauty, the splendor and the felicity of eternity.

Spinoza, one of the most sane and dispassionate of counselors, puts at our disposal a secret of transcendent value so far as the realization of the dignity of the soul and the immense significance of the labors and performances of life are concerned, when he exhorts us to think, to live, to love, to suffer and to act *sub specie aternitatis*, under the form and mode of eternity. It is not the bigness, nor the immediate masterfulness of life, but, rather, the eternalness of the energies, the benignity of the influences which emanate from it, that constitutes its essential divinity and crowns it with an excellency beyond the diminishing touch

of the outrages of fortune and the infelicities of time.

Whatever may be our belief, or unbelief, in regard to the perpetuity of the soul in the mode of self-consciousness—whether we believe its goal is the inevitable extinction that awaits the flower that has lived its brief and beautiful day, or that it moves through the night of death into fuller, more vivid and more radiant self-realization, as a planet whose light grows in volume and splendor as it moves toward the zenith—it is quite certain that the performance of the soul in this present terrestrial incarnation is dowered with immortality and with the distinction that belongs to an endless life.

George Eliot, though under the blight and shadow of the frigid ethics of the Methodism in which she was born and from which, until her last hour, she never emerged, must be regarded, from the point of view of intellectual preference and spiritual sympathy, as one of the exceedingly small, but very select, apostolate that in the latter half of the nineteenth century gathered about Auguste Comte, the arch-prophet of Positivism,

whose divinities are the illustrious men and the light-bearing women in all ages, nations, races and continents, whose worship is the adoration of humanity and whose liturgy is the prayer of enlightened thoughts, the aroma of fine actions and the incense of beautiful loves. It was part of the creed of the cult of Positivism—indeed, it was the sign of its superiority, of its high and cold culture, of its entire emancipation from the dwarfing influence of all credulity and superstition, to negate, with head erect and with firm emphasis, all faith in the immortality of the soul. It was the belief of all Positivists, and, therefore, of George Eliot, that the soul and the body are coequal partners, indissoluble in life and in death; that they exult in the sunshine together and go into the shadows together. And yet among the few memory-charming phrases that fell from the pen of George Eliot, the most fetching is the phrase, “corporate immortality,” by which she means, not an immortality of personality, but an immortality of its effluences, its actions, its thoughts, its passions, its devotions, its heroisms, its loyalties and its loves. Death denudes the personality of self-consciousness, but it is power-

less to touch the mundane equations of the spirit—its labors, its creations, its embodied imaginations, its uttered affections, its incarnate nobilities of thought and character, its high and excellent accomplishments. The dynamic of personality is eternal.

The unhappy negation of personal immortality, which finds insistent expression in the gospel of Positivism, evokes no sympathetic response in my thought. The whole universe, as it unfolds itself before my inmost vision and my deepest love, is a vast and glorious immortality. The cosmic spirit, with an equal intensity, abhors all negation—the negation of matter, the negation of spirit, the negation of life, the negation of personality. The modes which matter assumes may change through an endless succession of changes. Vapor may pass into the form of water, water into the form of ice. Ice, under the action of the sun's heat, may dissolve again into water. Water may then take the form of a tree. The leaves of the tree may become a mold and in time be transformed into a flower. The tree and the flower together may, under the pressure of the ages, be transformed into carbon, the carbon into

a diamond. Yet, through all these changes of form and variations of structure, the original matter-stuff remains the same—the same in substance, in quantity, in weight, in potentiality. Not one atom, through all these multiform changes, has been added to it, and not one atom subtracted from it.

And as the monad of matter never varies, never increases or diminishes in its myriad mutations and multiform changes, so the monad of personality survives the shock and the change of death. It is impervious to the disintegrating touch of time. It is indivisible and indissoluble. It may go through an infinite succession of forms, of modes, manifestations, incarnations; but the unitary self, the aboriginal monad, the self of you and the self of me, survives these ceaseless and progressive changes of garment, as the ultimate monad of matter, whether it be the molecule, the ion, or some more ethereal entity, survives the ceaseless, progressive changes of its modes. The genius of the universe is a genius of economy, of parsimony, of thrift. It wastes nothing. It saves all. The fundamental law of being is conservation. And if the Providence which reigns over the treas-

ures of the world practices a rigid and unfailing thrift in regard to the form of being of least value, matter, it would seem consonant with the highest sanity that it should practice an equally rigid and unfailing thrift in regard to the form of being of highest value, personality. This world would be an egregious banality if its stupendous mechanism should find its consummation in the lesser immortality of matter rather than in the greater immortality of spirit—if the ultimate ambition of the evolutionary process should be reached in a mass of star dust whirling in a wilderness of space rather than in great Plato's mind and in the Lord Christ's heart!

But whatever be the destiny of the spirit of man—be it an eternity quivering with a tremulous white heat of conscious life and thought and love, or nescience and "the void immense"—there is a more than sufficient compensation for all the tension, the strain and the warfare that fall to our portion upon this earth plane in the disinterested immortality of Positivism—the immortality of the artist in his art, of the author in his books, of the statesman in his oratory; of Spenser in the "Faërie Queene," of Milton in "Lycidas"

and "Comus," of Bunyan in the "Pilgrim's Progress," of John Selden in his "Table Talk," of Defoe in "Robinson Crusoe," of Addison in "Sir Roger de Coverley," of John Brown in "Marjorie Fleming," the short story of most perfect beauty in the English language; of Socrates in the "Apology," of St. John in his exquisitely tender memorial of The Last Supper, of Jesus in His Logia, in the light, the vitality, the inspiration, the sweetness of His marvelous gospel, and in the majesty and grace of His yet more marvelous life.

This corporate immortality—this austere, yet noble, hybrid of faith, the progeny of the wedlock of ancient stoicism with modern science—which is the portion of the prophets and the masters who have led humanity along the way of vision and of life, is equally the portion of the commonalty of men, however elementary may be the forces of their spirit, however slender and invisible may be the activities and influences that flow forth from them. Every thought we think, though it be submerged in the obscurity of the commonplace; every love we love, though it be swallowed up in the ocean of love in which it

is an indistinguishable drop; every deed we do, though it be lost in the inconspicuity that is the lot of all things trivial and unimportant, when once it has passed beyond the narrow boundaries of our personality to identify itself with the tremulous motivity and process of the world, becomes energetic with the undying potencies of eternity.

The material world as we behold it to-day is not the product of the activities of a few major suns. It is not the product of the sum of the activities of all its suns and all its planets. It is the product of an infinity of atoms which has, through the mighty mandates of the laws that govern matter, the laws of organization and dissolution, the centripetal and centrifugal forces of the universe, evolved, in ways labyrinthine and inscrutable, from nebulous stuff into the noble solidarity of the suns and moons and planets, the systems, the galaxies, the constellations that make the sidereal world what it is to-day—the actual universe as it reveals itself to our senses and declares its glories and its wonders to our intelligence.

The human world also is what it is, not because of the few men and women of unique power

and solitary splendor of faculty—not because of its massive, mandatory spirits who have thought and taught and wrought in the colossal way through the ages; not because Euripides has sung, or Giotto has painted, or Newton has discovered Nature's secrets, or Heloise has loved with a consuming passion, with the majestic ardor of an Olympian—but because of the myriad hosts that have swept over its surface, its masses succeeding each other age after age—masses visible as civilizations, as nations, as races; masses discernible as Greeks, as Romans, as Persians, as Egyptians, as Jews, as Aryans, as Semites; masses who have lived and dreamt and loved and suffered and died, unhonored and unsung, but whose genius has found expression in the genius of the immortals, whose meditations, sorrows, struggles, loves, hopes and tragedies have found utterance through philosopher, bard, epicist, lyrist, painter, sculptor, dreamer, who are, after all, only the consummation of the genius of the humanity of which they are a part, and whose highest visions have found articulation and attained to clarity of outline in the seer—in Confucius, in Sakya-muni, in Zoroaster, in Mohammed, in Jesus—the seer whose

mind is the mind of his race and whose faith is the faith of his race in its high hour of visitation.

In our casual way, in every department of thought and conduct, we divide the great human world into two categories—one the category of quality, the other the category of quantity; one the category of power, the other the category of weakness; one the category of the classes, the other the category of the masses. In the world of wealth we have the few masters and the many servants. In the world of intellect we have the few illuminati and the many illiterate. In the world of the talents we have the few men who govern and the multitude who are governed. But if we look just a little beyond the surface of things, we shall see that these categories are categories, not of reality, but of convenience. Humanity is a vast organism. The few and the many are one. Their talent is one. Their power is one. Their thought is one. Their struggle is one. Their triumph is one. "Whether one member suffer all the members suffer with it. Whether one member be honored all the members rejoice with it. For they are many members yet but one body." The glory of George Washington is

the glory of the people he led and fought and triumphed with and governed. They belong to each other. Each without the other is inconceivable. If each were conceivable without the other, each without the other would be inconsequent. Each with the other is mighty, masterful and invincible. A Homer, a Vergil, a Shakespeare has never yet sprung, Minerva-like, from the head of a god. He emerges out of the loins, the experiences, the passions, the temperament, the genius of his people. Give Homer a setting in the Elizabethan age, and we should have no Iliad. Shakespeare in Homer's Greece would not have been the Shakespeare we know, the most opulent mind in all the world. He would have been a lost soul, a mighty planet without an orbit in which to revolve. I say it with reverence, but with a firm conviction of its truthfulness, that Jesus would not have been, and could not have been, the Jesus we know—the Jesus whom we exalt in our meditations, and to whom we give an admiration without reserve and an adoration that belongs only to divinity—had He not been conceived in the matrix of Judaism and nourished on the traditions inspired by the Messianic hopes,

had His heart not surged and throbbed with the theocratic ideals and expectancies of Israel. Homer's epic is a corporate epic, in which every Greek, ancestral and of his own age, had his atomic share. Shakespeare's genius is a corporate genius, which includes within itself the inarticulate histrionism of the myriads of Englishmen of his own age and of all prior ages since England began to be. The spiritual beauty of Jesus is the corporate beauty of Israel—the beauty that had been gathering through all the long centuries of Israel's travails and trials and struggles, through its weary battles in the wilderness, its dreamings by the rivers of Babylon, its visions from Mount Horeb, Mount Zion and Mount Carmel—the corporate beauty of mankind. He is the lion of the tribe of Judah. He is also the son of man, the consummate flower of humanity.

This, then, is what I mean by the vision of life. It is beholding life, not as a force detached, not as a force existing for a few decades in separation and in pathetic loneliness, weakness and inconsequence, not as flashing into being and action on the breast of the river of time only to sink and be lost in the abyss—as a bubble comes to the

surface for a moment and then sinks and is lost in the deeps of the stream—but it is, rather, beholding life as a force, however minute and inconspicuous, in conjunction with the world-processes, under the form of eternity and immortal with the corporate immortality of nation, of race, of humanity, of the world.

Fortune may have ordained me—she may have ordained you—to work in the shadows, to fret out our days in petty and imperceptible performances. Our labor may be a drudgery, our task commonplace, without luster, without distinction. We may be lost in the indiscriminate hosts of menials who work without notice and without peculiar honor, in shop or factory, or office, or bank; in commerce, in state, or in church. Our deeds may be hidden in insignificance and our personality submerged in the vast army of thinkers, soldiers, lawyers, doctors, clerks, shopmen, servants. And yet, just as the majesty of the ocean is the majesty of the infinitesimal particles whose multitude and cohesion make the ocean, so the dignity of humanity is your dignity, my dignity, every man's dignity; for the dignity of humanity is, in its last analysis, the sum of the thoughts, the loves,

the deeds of the myriad men and women, high and low, rich and poor, master and servant, financier, lawyer, clergyman, engineer, artisan and digger in the ditch, who constitute its bulk. The achievement of the weakest conditions the achievement of the strongest. The talents of the many condition the power and the effectiveness of the genius of the few. The crown that symbolizes the might and the prowess of the king symbolizes the might and the prowess of his people and his nation. The immortality of the mass—the immortality of its works, its science, its patriotism, its songs, its heroisms, its faiths—is the immortality of the least distinguished among the struggling, toiling, sweating, battling hosts of this earth. Let us live, love and work *sub specie eternitatis!* And then we shall, even in the midst of its sorrows, its shadows and its trials, realize the sacred dignity of life, the infinite worth of its smallest services and the eternal value of its least accomplishments. How true, how finely and nobly true, are the words of the Psalmist, how rich they are in inspiration, how vital they are with cheer and with hope—"What is man that Thou art mindful of him? And the son of man,

that Thou visitest him? For Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels and hast crowned him with glory and honor!"

CHAPTER XI

DISTRIBUTION OF LIFE

THE compression of energy is of cardinal importance in the realization of the promise of our talents and in bringing life to its highest effectiveness, its fullest supremacy. Concentration is the secret of all power, and habitual concentration is the secret of all sustained and cumulative performance. The muscles must be woven into compactness before they can subserve, with the immediacy of instinct and with an adequate efficiency, the functions they are ordained to perform in the economy and activity of the body.

All culture—the culture of the hand, the eye and the ear; the culture of the imagination, the memory and the reason; the culture of conscience, of justice, magnanimity and mercy; the culture of the soul, of spiritual vision, of sensibility and passion—all culture, whatever its sphere or its kind, involves, as an antecedent condition, con-

vergence of faculty, compression of the energy of muscle, nerve, intellect, emotion, will.

Cosmic energy must concentrate in the furnace of the sun before it can be transmuted into the solar energy which the sun pours out upon its planets in the creative forms of light, heat and life. Cohesion is to the fluid forces of the spirit what solidification is to molten iron: it is the essence of their strength, their tensility, their resistance and their power of conquest.

Every reform has had its origin, its motive power and its progressive triumph in an *idée fixe*, in a compression of consciousness and passion that verges on obsession. Wesley, Finney, Garrison, Cromwell, St. Francis, Mohammed and St. Paul, each after his own manner and in his own kingdom, is the demonstration of a world-sweeping enthusiasm that has had its origin and impulsion in a divine compression of the energy, vision, passion and will of personality.

Every neap tide of progress—the uprising of democracy in England, the reformation of Germany, the French revolution, the independence of the Colonies, the integrity of the United States of America—that has swept humanity forward and

upward to higher elevations of life, freedom and happiness, has been the logical derivative of an enormous emotion compacted in a single thought. The shibboleth of democracy in England was "No taxation without the consent of parliament." The motto inscribed upon the ensigns of militant Protestantism was "The just shall live by faith." The fires of the French revolution were fanned into a fury of destruction by the breath of the multitude—the demagogues, the citizens, the jacquerie, the gamins—delirious with "Liberté, Fraternité, Egalité." The American colonists marched triumphantly on to an independent nationality inspired and innerved by the cry of freedom that found a response in every colonist's heart in which the spirit of patriotism dwelt, "No taxation without representation." The redemptive watchword of our national unity through all the perils, anxieties and ravages of civil strife was the pregnant phrase that fell from the lips of Daniel Webster in a moment of overmastering eloquence, "Liberty and union, now and forever, one and inseparable."

And yet experience teaches us, with unwearying reiteration, that every virtue when carried to the

point of the extreme becomes a vice. The courage that counsels not with caution becomes foolhardiness. The thrift that does not ally itself with the spirit of service becomes penuriousness. The zeal that does not consort with wisdom becomes arrogance and bigotry. Religion, when it overflows the restraining banks of sanity, ceases to be an inspiration and becomes a morbidity, an oppression, a pestilence. Prayer of disproportionate continuance becomes inaction. And the passion of salvation may pass into mania and, as with all extravagances, become unsocial—as in the parasitic monasticism of the Middle Ages, when monk and nun, secluded from the stain and contamination of the world, strove, in an agony of penance and mortification, to attain to the white perfection of the saint, at the cost of the toil and the sweat of the sinners whom they shunned except when want necessitated contact; as in the mysticism of all ages, whose devotees, the voluptuaries of the spirit, have fed their souls so constantly on ambrosial ecstasies that they have grown insensitive and indifferent to the common sorrows and the inferior needs of the men and women with whom salvation is not a luxury, a rapture, but a

stern matter and only to be achieved through fear and trembling.

Now, in accordance with the Aristotelian law that extremes meet, the virtue of concentration, whose secret is the secret of all power and dominion, and whose strength is the strength of the lords and rulers of the world, may be, when indulged to the point of exaggeration, a vice prolific in an evil progeny—a progeny of stunted faculties, impoverished talents, misshapen souls, personalities without symmetry, compulsion or charm. Indeed, I believe this infirmity of the extreme compression of the manifold energies of life in one sphere to the exclusion and starvation of other spheres of personality to be one of the capital infirmities of mankind. It is the vice of most general distribution, and a vice not the less insidious and destructive because its ugliness and malignancy are hidden from the sight of the casual observer and because it is a vice of such large extension and popularity as to escape the reproach of scorn and the sting of criticism. We all err through the special emphasis of the part at the expense of the whole. We lay the stress upon the body and neglect the mind. We coddle the

intellect and starve the emotions. We exploit the emotions and permit the conscience to waste away, as by a pernicious anæmia, in some unwholesome dungeon of the soul. We congest with an excess of vitality in one part and atrophy through a deficiency of vitality in other parts of our being. We make a fetish of the body and with a voracity that grows by what it feeds upon, the inappeasable voracity of vanity and pride and appetite and lust, it devours the aliment of life which Nature in her desire for symmetry intended for the spirit, the organ of the Infinite. We make a divinity of the intellect and we reduce, by the tyrannical emphasis we lay upon the importance of knowledge, the noble dimensions of manhood to the ignoble dimensions of the pedant, the professor, the academician, who may be an historian, a Latinist, a Hellenist, a grammarian, a geographer, or an astronomer, but who, notwithstanding his familiarity with the air, the earth and the stars, the deftness and facility with which he juggles with Greek roots and Latin declensions, is neither a presence nor a personality. We scorn the flesh: we flout the intellect: we invest the sum of our passion, our enthusiasm and our thought

in the things of the spirit; and our very one-sidedness, the inequality of our interest and the disproportion of our faculties make it impossible for us to attain to the spirituality that we have chosen as our good. A spiritual compression that does not take into consideration the claims of the flesh, the prerogatives of the intellect and the rights of the heart is not in the way that leads to eternal life, to sainthood. It is in the way whose end is destruction—the Pharisee, the doctrinaire, the bigot, the sectarian without imagination, the reformer without charity, the churchman without godliness and the Puritan without culture, without grace and without manners.

When I have spoken, with a note of sadness and reproach in my criticism, of the partial and excessively emphasized manifestations of life that we meet with to-day on every side, and their imperative concomitants, depletion, contraction, leanness of personality (for though in the march of life I have found many people who have drawn me to them by their weakness, or by their lovable-ness, I have seen very few who have compelled my admiration by the majesty and the symmetry of their force), I have been told that this tumorous

growth of the special faculty, this blatant emphasis of the departmental talent, is inevitable; that, through the exigency and pressure of business, time is not permitted man for general culture, for the equal nourishment and exercise of his faculties, for the impartial and unstressed distribution of the divine ichor of life, for the evocation and the fashioning of the whole man—if not without blemish, at least without dismemberment. If this be true; if the push and the pull of circumstance be so constricting; if the tendency of modern civilization, with its eagerness for power and efficiency, is ever toward increasing centralization, toward intensive limitation of personality, then modern civilization is an utter failure. It is a failure because it puts a greater value upon a part than upon the whole of life. It is a failure because it robs man of the largest and best portion of his being. It is a failure because it bereaves man of his bigness, his nobility and his interestingness. It is a failure because it denies him the inspirations and enrichments of literature, of the arts, of all culture that makes life a thing of dignity and beauty. It is a failure because it commits man to hopeless ennui, to a dull and

stupid routine of days, and stifles the joy which can find a habitation only in the soul that holds a large, free converse with the world.

If the assertiveness of the talent be a matter of compression, the spaciousness of life is just as certainly a matter of diffusion. The more the spirit spreads itself over the world, the more abundant are its points of contact and the fuller is its content of sensation and experience. We grow in stature and in grace by dispersion. We say of a man that his advice is worthy of consideration because of his large and wide experience. And what is experience but the sum of the facts and the significances of facts that the soul has gathered in its moments of expatiation, in its outward flights?

The worth of life is measured by its area, as well as by its intensity. The tree is rooted in the ground. It is stationary. It is limited to two elements, the earth and the air; and its relations with these two elements are confined within very narrow bounds. The bird also is limited, by its organization and instinct, to the elements of earth and air; but its range is wider, its aliment more varied. It is not stationary like the tree. It is not constrained by an inherent immobility to abide

in an environment that may be alien to its nature and hostile to its comfort. If an acorn fall into the crevice of a rock and germinate there, the oak tree must abide and waste and wither in its inimical surroundings. It is endowed with a low vitality and a deficient locomotion, and a low vitality and a deficient locomotion imply a narrow area. But, if the bird finds its environment uncongenial, ill adapted to the needs of its peculiar organization, it takes wing and goes off in search of a more propitious habitat, where it will find a climate that accords with its nature and an abundance of the food it requires for the sustenance of its life. The dog is correlated with a larger area than the bird, as the bird is correlated with a larger area than the tree, because of the greater complexity of its organization. The dog lives in the air with less freedom than the bird, but it lives on the earth with more freedom, with a far greater range of contacts. It has relations of instinct, of sentiency, of intelligence, of affection with its environment inexpressibly more elaborate than the bird. It lives more and, therefore, its area of action, of consciousness, of response, is larger and wider.

Man, by his organization, is incapable of the flight of the eagle and the speed of the greyhound, but the spirit of life in him is so rich, so varied, so elaborate that he not only adjusts himself with expertness to all the environments of inferior organisms, but to an environment that is his peculiar inheritance, because of the vast, free range of his intelligence and the almost limitless pliancy of his faculties and organs. He lives in the earth and from the earth like the tree. He lives in the air and from the air like the bird. He lives from the water and, for brief spaces of time, in the water like the fish. He ranges the earth like the dog or the deer, in search of food. He is an inhabitant, with the higher animals, of the psychic world—the world of instinct, memory, automatic functions, sensations and affections. When, however, he ascends into the world of reason, of self-consciousness, of his essential humanity, he comes into contact with the realities that sweep far away beyond earth and water and air and the primitive instincts and emotions that link him with the lower creatures in the wondrous procession of life. He comes into contact, through his senses, his imagination, his reason, with the mystery of being, with

the infinities of space, with the laws and forces of the universe, with the immensity, the order, the wisdom and the glory of the eternities.

Now, as the range and richness of its area denote the measure of the dignity and worth of life at large, so the magnitude and the fullness of its diffusion denote the measure of the culture, the illumination and the grace of personality. The poet lives in a state of distribution. As a cloud moves with dreamy indolence over the tree-tops, so the spirit of the poet wanders with a leisurely pensiveness over the world, communing with the sights and sounds, the lights and shadows of nature, with the hopes, the fears, the joys, the sorrows, the tragedies, the longing and the loves of humanity. The cadence dwells in the soul of him, but the message comes to him from without, from the peasant's heart and hut, as in "Michael" and "Margaret" and "Ruth," the pastoral poems of Wordsworth; from the primitive simplicities of rural life, as in that most tender and most human of poems, "Out to Old Aunt Mary's," of James Whitcomb Riley; from the joy and sorrows of friendship, as in the "In Memoriam" of Tennyson; from the pathos of tradition, the color of race

and locality, as in the "Hiawatha" of Longfellow; from the wars and tragedies of time, as in the Epic of Homer and the "Hamlet" of Shakespeare; from the yearning and the travails of the spirit straining toward the Infinite, as in the hymnic literature of the church, the "Kyrie Eleison," the "Agnus Dei," the "Te Deum Laudamus," "A Mighty Fortress is Our God," "Rock of Ages," "Jesus, Lover of My Soul," "Nearer, My God, to Thee" and "Abide With Me."

Homer must disperse his soul; he must adventure far and wide, in body or in thought, or in both body and thought; he must travel in many lands and undergo many experiences; he must explore the heights and plumb the depths of the mind and the heart of Ulysses, of Penelope, of the suitors, and journey over sea and earth, above the earth and under the earth, before he can give to the world the "Odyssey." The Epic of Homer is august because his thought moved with far-reaching rhythm through vast areas of tradition, experience and fact.

All culture is distributive. Science must disperse itself over the data of physics, chemistry, or biology, if it would formulate with accuracy the

laws of molecular affinity, the polarity of atoms and the survival of the fittest in the struggle of life. Darwin wrought a revolution, not only in the world of science, but also in the world of theology, by his epochal book, "The Origin of Species." But, if you read his biography, or the story of his travels—of his adventures, of his collecting expeditions—as it is recorded in "The Voyage of the Beagle," you will see over what wide surfaces Darwin distributed his intellectual observations before he dared to draw inferences, deduce conclusions and publish to the world his revolutionary theories.

Wherein does Walter Bagehot differ from the other financiers of his day? There were doubtless many bankers in England, in America and in Europe, in the latter half of the nineteenth century who measured up to an equality with him in weight, solidity and penetration of intellect. Yet they are forgotten. They are swallowed up in the lethe and the impotency of the grave, while Bagehot, though dead, lives and is a power, a growing power, a waxing light, in the realm of letters. And Bagehot lives because he refused to imprison his gifts within the narrow walls of a

bank and to restrict his intellectual interests to the mechanism of exchange, the flotation of bonds and consols, the study of the moods and caprices of fluid wealth and the understanding of the economic factors that make for the contraction and expansion of credit. He understood the mysteries of finance. He knew the methods, the preferences and the solitudes of "The Old Lady of Threadneedle Street" with an intellectual intimacy exceeding that of any other financier of his day. But his nomadic, inquisitive intellect could not be confined within the cramping boundaries of Lombard Street. It wandered along the highways of politics and the byways of statesmanship. It sought converse with the philosophers, the poets, the historians. It reveled in the winsome world of fiction and the drama. He sat daily at banquet with the masters. He lived with the mighty ones and in their works and characters—with the "Analogy" of Bishop Butler; with Tristram Shandy and Uncle Toby of Sterne; with David Copperfield, Pickwick, Michael Micawber, Harold Skimpole and Pecksniff of Dickens; with Joseph Andrews, Squire Western, Tom Jones and Amelia of Fielding; with John Balfour of Burleigh, Effie

Deans and Meg Merrilies of Scott; with Lavengro, Jasper and Isopel Berners of Borrow; with Dobyns, Lord Steyne, Crawley, Becky Sharp and Colonel Newcome of Thackeray; with Cromwell, William III and Frederick the Great; with Grote and Macaulay, Dante, Corneille, Molière, Hugo, Goethe, Schiller; with the Attic philosophers and dramatists; with the Latin orators and poets—and he has given to us, as the result of these communions with the dignitaries of the world of letters, volumes of appreciation and criticism that will keep his memory alive and his spirit a potent influence of light and pleasure so long as English literature survives. He belongs with the unforgettable ones because of the wide dispersion of his intellectual interests, the large and broad diffusion of his literary passion and curiosity.

John Stuart Mill was the head of a department, one of a host of officials in the India House who have come and gone. They are lost in the promiscuity of death and as undifferentiated in memory as the leaves that fell from the oaks of England fifty years ago, but John Stuart Mill survives, a power of intellect for all time. He is immortalized in his "Autobiography," his "Logic,"

his "Political Economy," his "Representative Government," his "Liberty" and his "Subjection of Women," the book which is to the political enfranchisement of women what John the Baptist was to the evangel of Christianity. He is a permanent figure in English politics and letters—not merely on account of the rigid precision, the almost mathematical accuracy of his intellectual processes, but, rather, because his nature was lavishly distributive. It voyaged to the outermost limits of experience in search of facts and laws, in pursuit of the wisdom in submission to which man finds his security, prosperity and happiness.

Space—always more space! That is the imperious need of the human spirit. We may exist: we may breathe: we may endure in some special nook of thought and action: we may earn a livelihood: we may eke out the sustenance of life: we may keep body and soul together: we may be signally proficient in our profession or our business: we may think automatic thoughts and perform automatic deeds in the little corner of God's great world that we have chosen as our own; but if we would live—live in the big, the noble, the exultant way—our spirit must go forth, as did the

Jews in ancient times, in a great and wide dispersion. The unique and certain way of power is compression, but the royal way of felicity is the way of the distributive life. The farther our spirit ranges through the exhaustless spaces of thought, of literature, of history, of faith, of hope and of love, the more jubilant will be the surge and the beat of the blood in our veins, the fuller, the sweeter the joy of our hearts.

CHAPTER XII

MASTERY

THE world we live in and that is the home of our soul during this terrestrial incarnation is, to at least the extent of a moiety, a self-creation. It is a mirror of our own manufacture, in which we find the real self—its ideals, its passions and its moods—reflected with scrupulous exactness of feature and detail. There is a form of idealism that is so intensely subjective as to make the ego the creator, the sum and the substance of all things. The world, according to this highly sublimated philosophy, has no existence in itself. It is a continuous creation and projection of the ego. Matter and space, the earth and man, smiles and tears, joys and sorrows, life and death, have no actuality beyond the periphery of self-consciousness. The ego spins the universe out of its own substance—its dreams, its imaginations and its desires—as the spider spins its web out of its own being.

We all, I am sure, by an instinct of reality which is of the very structure of our consciousness, reject this philosophy, which is the ultimate form of egomania, as a fallacy from postulate to conclusion. Yet it wears an air of verisimilitude, for if the ego be not the creator of the world of actuality that lies beyond consciousness, it can be said without exaggeration that it is at least co-partner in the creation of the world which is its special and exclusive abode. Man is, to use the pregnant phrase of Pascal, "un roseau," a reed; but he is "un roseau pensant," a thinking reed. He is dowered with the creative and formative powers of a demiurge. He can, by the affirmation of his spirit and the autocracy of a mood, transmute the gloom of the sky into radiancy; and by an inversion of the process, he can turn the jocund light of a cloudless day into shadow and despair. If the self in us be pathological, life is a malady and the world is a burden. If the self in us be tonic, life is health and the world is an eager stimulant. If the self be intemperately mobile, life is a succession of swift and oppugnant sensations, a rapid flux of changing and contrarious moods, an hysteria in which laughter alternates with sighs, as the

sunburst alternates with showers in the early days of spring. If, on the other hand, the self be centered in the serenity of a sovereign purpose which knows "neither variableness nor shadow of turning," then life is a thing of order, with the stability of a coherent logic holding together all its actions and its enterprises.

The spirit of Wordsworth scanned the world through eyes whose vision was tranquil and finely objective, and the world unfolded itself to his spirit a majestic spectacle of power and wisdom, a poem of cosmic magnificence and splendor, an epic of divine authorship. The spirit of Coleridge contemplated the world through eyes laden with the unrest and chaos of opium, and the world that answered to his spirit was infected by his own malady—it was nervous, restless, fantastical, morbid with excess of drugs.

Job, embittered by the successive waves of calamity that swept over him and his household, "spake and cursed his day, and said 'Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said "There is a man child conceived." ' ' " Life to the Job of sorrows was an utter calamity, a catastrophe, a desolation, a pessimism, with no

feeblest ray of light to relieve its stygian darkness. The floods also swept over the stalwart, indomitable spirit of Isaiah—floods of shame and wrath, of weariness and discouragement. Yet in the heat and the fury of battle we find him lifting up his voice in a song of supernal fortitude and deathless sublimity, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord. My soul shall be joyful in my God, for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation. He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with jewels." To Isaiah, exalted by the vision of the Messiah, "the Conqueror that cometh from Edom with dyed garments from Bozrah, glorious in His apparel, traveling in the greatness of His strength," the world was tremulous with the exquisite joy that fills the heart of the bridegroom as he goes forth to the nuptials that are to make the beloved his own. To Job, submerged in the tumult of catastrophe upon catastrophe, the world was shrouded with the gloom and the desolation that oppress the heart of the malefactor as he goes to face his doom.

Now, if man be the co-partner of the Invisible

Artificer in creating his own cosmos, in giving substance, form and color to his own destiny, how vital to his attainment and happiness is the virtue of self-mastery! If the world be a chaos, unless my soul be centered in an imperturbable calm, then it is my duty—my first duty—to achieve this imperturbable calm, at any cost. If life be a wretched and squalid poverty, unless my soul be rich with a priceless content of beautiful thoughts and with experiences of ineffable delicacy and fineness, then the duty of paramount significance in my personal decalogue is to feast my soul upon the meditations, the ideals, the emotions and the friendships that make for wealth of soul and beauty of nature. If life be a succession of petty frictions and annoyances, if its dignity suffer habitual diminution from the fretting and impertinent touch of trivial anxieties and minor cares, if its serenity be menaced by the constant nibbling of uncongenial conditions and the ceaseless nagging of infinitesimal criticisms, then, again, the matter that is of major importance to me is to lift, by the affirmation of the will and the might of prayer, my soul into the heights where it may reign untroubled by the nipping fingers of

circumstance—as the stars move through the highways of space, their serenity undisturbed by the fuss and the rage of the clouds as they sweep across the sky.

Self-mastery is my task, your task, in life by way of preëminence. It is to life what arithmetic is to the higher mathematics. It bears the same intimacy of relationship to character and happiness that gravity does to the poise and stability of the earth. It is the taproot of all the virtues—the virtues of refinement, of dignity, of sweetness, of patience, of repose, of charm. It is the first link in the chain of power. It is the initial step on the road that leads to victory and honor. It is the essence of chivalry. It is the flame that shines with mild and steady light in the commanding eye. It is to man what love is to God, the substance and the excellence of his divinity. That is a wonderful hour in the history of a life when the higher self, after the long and galling humiliation of repeated lapses, at last establishes itself upon its rightful throne and announces, not with arrogance, but with becoming dignity and authority, to the constituency that makes up its empire, the final victory over its own wayward and an-

archic tendencies. There is no moment more significant, more fraught with high and rich results, than the moment when a man can say, "I am master, I am regent, of my soul."

Self-mastery begins with a proper and rational restraint of the various elements, tastes and habits of thought and action which in ensemble constitute our personality. Sheer negation is fertile with energy and achievement. Winter is an efficient husbandman. The frost plows deeper and with greater thoroughness than any machine of man's device. Poverty is the spur of success, the counselor of thrift and the impelling power of prosperity. The poet says "there is more faith in honest doubt than in half the creeds." The Reformation was conceived in the negation of Luther's mind, in his doubt of the validity of the morals and the doctrine of the Roman church. Quakerism—a most ghastly word, but which connotes, perhaps, the most perfect expression of essential Christianity and the most exquisite embodiment of the religion of Jesus as a force and ideal of life that the world has yet known—had its origin in the negation of the forms and rituals which through the ages have exhausted the moral

strength and sapped the spiritual vitality of the church. The religion of Christ itself had its birth—if not as a religion, at least as an historic force—in its negation of the emasculated traditions and the arid moralities of Judaism.

There are times and situations in which pure negativeness is power in its most impressive mien. Silence is, in its proper place and season, more eloquent, more persuasive, than a flux of words. The restraint that is born of strength—the restraint of dress, the restraint of authority, the restraint of utterance, the restraint of voice, the restraint of gesture, the restraint of manner—is always an arresting form of beauty. Character reveals its essential nobility and its innate aristocraticalness with almost greater clarity of outline, and with even more winsomeness, through its negations—its fine reticences, its subtle concealments, its diplomatic silences—than through its affirmative expressions and positive actions. Gentility almost touches insubstantiality. No quality of character is more evidential, yet none so richly abounds in negations, in what is not, rather than what is. A gentleman is defined by the repression, rather than by the projection, of his person-

ality. Beauty of manner finds its inspiration and its nourishment largely in a decalogue of inhibitions. Repose in action; reticence in speech and thought; concealment of the sanctities of the inner life; the seclusion of our sacramental loves; silence in the presence of the great mysteries; aversion to all that is theatrical and flamboyant; retirement from the confusing whirl and motion of the world; abhorrence of the noise, the froth, the glitter, the fidgetings, the ceaseless comings and goings—these are the marks of gentility; and they are negations, beautiful, delightful negations.

The virtue of restraint has a peculiar pertinency to our times. Our age is sadly vulgarized by incontinence of action, by excessive mobility of nerves, by the passion of change. It is an age of impermanencies, of fickle interests, ephemeral attentions, fugitive pleasures and transient enthusiasms. We rush, without method or sanity, from New York to California, from California to Florida, from Florida to Europe, from town to country, from country to town, from function to function, from the drama to the opera, from sensation to sensation, from excitement to excitement, from cult to cult, from mania to mania. We are

as volatile as the bee fluttering from flower to flower in search of nectar, with this difference: the bee finds the nectar, while we, instead of the nectar we seek, find the malady of nervousness we do not seek. Our civilization is a civilization of frayed and fretted nerves. The individual is nervous. The home is nervous. Business is nervous. The theater is nervous. The church is nervous. Our nerves are so unstable, so insolent with the tyranny of motion, that they imperil the decencies of life, insult the dignity of art and crucify the sanctity of worship. We have not time to read Thackeray or Hugo. We condemn Shakespeare as tedious and exhausting. Only with reluctance and on the theory that "prudence is the better part of valor" do we concede the Almighty God an hour on Sunday morning. We have abundant time for trivialities—for dress, for dinner, for the dance, for tennis, for golf, for yachting and for polo—but for the serious things, the things that matter, that touch life with sublimity and crown it with magnificence, we insist on urgency. The dramatist must practice brevity in his dialogue, the orator in his discourse, the novelist in his fiction and the clergyman in his prayers.

Our age is great, impressively great, in the affairs of commerce, industry and finance, in its management and manipulation of matter, of commodities, of wealth in all its forms. It is sadly lacking, however, in the ultimate greatness—the greatness of serenity of mind, of repose of spirit. We must learn the art of self-control, the art of self-restraint, the art of self-delimitation. We must subjugate our nerves and make them subserve our higher interests. We must conquer the passion of motion that spells vulgarity and the hysteria of nerves that eventuates in exhaustion and disgust. We must curb our volatile moods and check our appetites, and live with a fine and passionate loyalty in the eternal permanencies which make for the nobility, the beauty and the calm of the soul.

But if the negative virtue of restraint be an element, it is by no means the most important element in self-mastery. The brook must flow within its banks if it would flow at all, for it is the banks which make the brook a brook. But if the brook would be of large service to the world, it must wend its way to the river and, through the river, to the sea. The monk is the very incarna-

tion of the spirit of negation. His virtues as a Dominican, an Augustinian, a Benedictine, a Trappist, are virtues of abstinence, poverty and chastity. Still, there is a vast gulf between monkhood and manhood. There was a large, but not a sufficient, redemption for humanity in the restrictive laws of Moses. The absence of the spirit of falsehood does not necessarily involve the presence of the spirit of truth. Repose is beautiful, but the repose of a rock held in ageless rigidity by the unyielding arms of Nature is not comparable in majesty with the repose of a world that moves on its way through the heavens "Ohne hast, ohne rast," without haste and without rest. A penitentiary may be a model so far as the virtues of reticence and restraint are concerned, but we would not enthrone it as a school to which we would send our young men and women to learn righteousness of the perfect kind. The north and south are in juxtaposition compared with the distance that separates the negations of the Puritan expert in the law from the beauty of holiness that radiates with such vitality and sweetness from the personality of Jesus. One may be at the same time in-offensive and useless.

I knew a notable churchman of the accepted type and of flawless reputation. He was an archangel in the morality of negations. He never, even in the most exasperating situation, in the red heat of anger, in the wildest tumult of his nerves, indulged in irritation or profanity. He did not permit himself the luxury of mild, though, according to the severest interpretations of the law, questionable, habits. He did not go to the theater, because, according to his ethical canons, the theater was a satanic institution. He held no commerce with the simple diversions whereby the average man mitigates the pressure and the burden of life. All diversion was to him a waste of time, and the only way in which time could be honorably and legitimately wasted in the light of his austere standards was in stagnation and vacuity. This man was as harmless in life as in death, but, alas! when we measure the power, the value, the positive equation of his life by the contribution of his long years to the elevation, the enrichment and the betterment of society, in life and in death he was almost of equal value. He is wholly negative in death, and he was negative, pathetically negative, as a power for humanity and God in life.

The impotencies of self-limitation have their explanation in the lack of an adequate finality. Restraint is not in itself an excellence. There is neither sanity nor beauty in mere repression. Virtue is not of the essence of the self-denial that has no end beyond itself. Self-negation is energetic with the divinities of life only when it moves toward self-consummation. We imprison the thrush in a cage—not because the cage is in itself a desirable habitation, but because only by means of the cage can we enjoy the song of the thrush. As I write, a narcissus, with lovely white blossoms scented with a most delicate and elusive fragrance, lifts its head over me as if in benediction. A little while ago all its subtle grace and aroma slept in the dark recesses of a bulb. If the soul of the narcissus could have uttered, in articulate speech, its grievance, I think it would have protested against the darkness and joylessness of its prison, but, really, the incarceration of the soul of the narcissus in its dungeon of ugliness and shadow was the decree of an inerrant wisdom, for it was only through confinement in the bulb that the narcissus could distill its fragrance and realize the perfect beauty of its blossom. The bulb was not

a sepulcher; it was a nursery. Its finality was not its own darkness, but the dainty loveliness of the flower that now looks down upon me in benignant ministry.

Self-mastery, then, in its larger significance means more than a negation that exhausts itself in its own pain and barrenness. It means a negation whose finality is a full and symmetrical self-expression. The rationale of all partial curtailments of life is that the whole man may be blessed with a larger and nobler prosperity. We bridle the passions, that they may not run away with the chariot of the spirit. We curb our ambitions, that they may not consume the peace of the mind and imperil the felicity of the heart. We delimit the power and the authority of the intellect, that the intellect may not encroach upon the rights of the emotions and bereave them of their gayety and joyousness. We confine the conscience within due bounds, that it may not turn the sweetness of life into bitterness and the joy of life into sorrow. We circumscribe our emotions, that they may not suborn reason, dethrone conscience and reduce to nothingness, with the intensity of their fires, the noble edifice of life wrought out of the fair dreams

of our spirit and the red blood that flows in our veins. The fragmentary self immures itself for a moment to earn for the whole self an eternal freedom. We die in the flesh to-day to live more copiously in the flesh to-morrow. We die in the mind to-day to live more richly, more abundantly, in the mind through all the æons that lie before us. It was not for any intrinsic and ultimate virtue in the pain and ignominy of Calvary: it was for "the joy that was set before Him" that the Great Sufferer bore the indignity and the shame of the cross. Jesus gave Himself up in a superb and godlike act of self-mastery to the tragedy of the crucifixion because through the cross, and only through the cross, could truth find in Him its noblest utterance, heroism its highest glory, power its supreme sovereignty, holiness its consummate beauty and majesty a world empire.

The world is still, so far as its unthinking masses are concerned, deplorably in bondage to the ethics of antiquity, which sought to exalt man and glorify God by sacramentalizing poverty and canonizing pain. The world's conception of a halo is a vast self-denial. The soul is divine, not by virtue of its possessions, but by virtue of its elimina-

tions—its poverty, its humility, its chastity, its virginity, its fasting, its deprivation, its hunger and its thirst. But this austerity of conscience that identifies righteousness with gloom, holiness with penance and salvation with eternal self-exhaustion, is not self-mastery. It is self-perversion: it is self-debasement: it is self-destruction; but it is not self-mastery. Self-mastery is affirmative in its method and positive in its aim, which is life, always life—abounding, proportioned, radiant and exultant life. Its ultimate good is the enduring serenity and the flawless joy of the spirit, the eternal smile of the soul. Its government is the synthetical government of the democracy of all the factors and the elements of human nature.

That man is not the master of himself who gives the primacy to the will, or to the intellect, or to the emotions, or to the passions. That man is master of himself who, by a wise and equitable management, makes all the diverse and varied powers of his being minister to the totality and the triumph of personality, and who harmonizes body, mind, heart and soul so that “they make one music as before, but vaster,” more sublime, a perfect symphony of life.

CHAPTER XIII

OUTWARDNESS

MAN is, by the structure of his being, an amphibian. He lives by an equal necessity, but not always with an equal facility and intensity, in two kingdoms—the inner kingdom of self-consciousness and the outer kingdom of actuality. It is one of the foremost concerns of life to bring these two kingdoms into progressive equipollence, into mobile equilibrium, so that the self in us will neither be wearied with its own companionship nor oppressed by the bigness and the burden of a world it cannot assimilate and digest.

A fine passion of domesticity reigns in the substance of the soul. We know, as if by some cryptic instinct, that the kingdom of heaven is within us; that the beholding eye brightens or dims the light of day; and that the beat of the spirit conditions the rhythm of the world. The self urged by the compulsion of hunger goes forth into the

outer world in search of aliment, sensation, experience, knowledge, love and beauty. After a brief visit in this far-away land, it is overcome with nostalgia and finds no rest until it has returned to its proper and familiar habitation. There is no home in which we are so comfortable, with which we are so completely en rapport, as the home of our own thoughts and emotions, the home of our own soul. The most of us would rather live in the narrow cabin of self than in the vast palace of the universe. And yet this proneness to self-habitation may, in its extreme forms, work irreparable harm to the spirit and, by insidious encroachments, deprive it of power and bereave it of health and happiness.

The talent that rests in the comfort of inertia, within the confining limits of its present achievement, is doomed to atrophy by a law that is as inexorable as it is just. The citizen whose thoughts never wander beyond the boundaries of his locality becomes constantly more insular. The magnitude of the planet and the importance of the nation become reduced to the magnitude and the importance of the town in which he lives. The religion that cannot behold God except in the creed and the

worship of its own temple moves in a way whose mournful finale is inanition and death. Excessive subjectivity is to the soul what corpulency is to the body. It is a disease laden with atony and morbidity, as corpulency of body is laden with indolence and infirmity. It is a drug that preys, with a feline treachery, upon the nerve and fiber of personality. It measures life by the canon of a pessimism born of debility and enshrouds the world in the jaundice of the soul.

What a pathetic loveliness broods over the pages of "The Memorials of a Quiet Life" by Augustus Hare! It is a passionate, though subdued, soliloquy on the transitoriness, the pathos and the mystery of life. It is quintessential in its charm and delicacy. But its charm is the charm of languor, and its delicacy is the delicacy of invalidism. It is a sustained "Traumerei." The odor that clings to its every meditation in my memory is the odor of the violet, which, though pleasant to the sense of smell, by reason of its subtlety always brings to my mind the thought of the transiency, the mortality, of all things.

There is quite often an appealing beauty in weakness. The flower of the strawberry shrub

is odorless until it is bruised by some alien and hostile touch. Its delicious fragrance has its birth in outrage and indignity. Our neighbor passes us with proud carriage, buoyant step, and he comes and goes without commanding our admiration, without changing the beat of our heart. His strength is not sufficiently accentuated to be impressive and mandatory. It finds us, and leaves us, indifferent and unresponsive. But some day a searching sorrow, an overwhelming shame, comes to him, crushing into the dust his habitual pride and self-sufficiency; and then, in his sorrow, his humiliation, his defeat, our thought goes out to him in tenderness, in comradeship, in love. We are drawn to him by the appealing beauty of weakness, of deficiency. We are one with him in the somber confederacy of sorrow.

And there are books which fascinate by their pathology, whose beauty is the beauty of a soul in dissolution, of a heart habited in woe, of a will overmastered and dethroned. What an allure-ment do we find in "The Imitation of Christ" of Thomas à Kempis, in "The Way of Perfection" of St. Theresa, in "The Holy Living and Dying" of Jeremy Taylor, in the Journal of Maurice de

Guerin, in the "Obermann" of Sénancour, in "Récit d'une Soeur" of Mrs. Augustus Craven, in the "Journal Intime" of Amiel and in the "Prayers and Religious Dissertations" of Madame Guyon! Yet the grace that haunts the pages of these great books that have earned for themselves a permanent place in literature is the grace of exhaustion, of weakness, of despair, of contrition, of suffering, of sin, of sorrow, of death. They are the beautiful morbidities of souls that have lost their poise, their sanity, their virility, their buoyancy through habitual self-confinement and incontinent self-introspection.

It should be the cardinal function of religion to emancipate man from all the parochialisms of his nature. The very nomenclature of the spiritual consciousness is fraught with suggestions of immensity and encinte with ideals whose scope and elevation should eventuate in largeness of outlook, in nobility of thought and magnificence of conduct. As soon as the race-consciousness—whether it be in the Hindu, in the Egyptian, in the Parsee, in the Greek, in the Slav, or in the Anglo-Saxon—arrives at the stage of adolescence, it thinks of the Eternal in the terms of infinity.

God, whatever His name may be—Jehovah, Brahma, Zeus, Allah, Jupiter, Dieu, Eternal Energy, First Cause, or Divine Principle—is clothed with the attributes of power, wisdom, holiness, beauty, love, lifted to such ineffable heights as to be lost in the immensity and vagueness of the absolute. If man were to reflect in the practical affairs of life—in business, in politics, in society, in the home, in the church, in the nation—the monumental and stately affirmations of his theocratic consciousness, he would be a very god on earth and the kingdom of heaven a vivid and glorious actuality in time, and not the pale fabric of a dream.

But religion as we behold it defined in the actualities of life—in the conduct and the manners of the communion of the saints of every age, cult and church—does not, in the least degree, assume the qualities of greatness, magnificence and nobility. The thing that impresses one in the contemplation of the spiritual life of the average communicant is the paltriness, the mediocrity, the incongruity and the utter gracelessness of his standards and his performances. Our Christian civilization, in its emphasis of the materialities, its furi-

ous greed, its inappeasable avarice, its blatant commercialism, its lust of power and display, its cruelty, its ruthlessness, its destructiveness and its militancy, is a mockery and the precise antithesis of the spirit of the Jesus of the New Testament. The most Christless civilization in the world to-day is the Christian civilization. It is the civilization most signally dominated by the mania of matter, by the vanity of appearances, by the tyranny of power and by the lust of blood. The real peril to humanity is not the Yellow Peril: it is not the peril of Confucianism, or Shintoism; it is, if we are to judge by the stern facts which limn themselves in our vision at the present moment with appalling vividness of outline—the hate, the barbarity, the deficient chivalry, the brutal fury of our militancy and the mass and destructiveness of our armaments—the peril of the white man, the peril of a Christian civilization that ignores Christ as an impracticable idealist and dreamer.

If we were to ask for an explanation of this tragical collapse of essential Christianity, we would find it in the excessive interiority of our religious theories and our spiritual standards. The Romanist has not turned his thought outward

to study theology and ecclesiasticism at the feet of the Master of the church. His doctrines are all home-made, manufactured in the Vatican by cardinals and pope. The Immaculate Conception, the Real Presence, Transubstantiation, the Miracle of the Mass, the Seven Sacraments—these doctrines are not Biblical. They are not derived from the teachings of Christ, or sanctioned by the example of Christ. They are pure subjectivity, woven out of the tradition-dominated imagination and the sterile logic of pope, presbyter and monk.

The Augustinianism which runs, a black thread of horror and despair, through the history, the theology, the creeds, the moralities and the liturgies of the Roman, the Anglican and the Protestant churches has not its foundation in the salubrious, the bold, the free, the glorious God-consciousness of Jesus. Its foundation is the barren scholasticism and the sin-sick conscience of Augustine, the sovereign theologian of the Christian church, who supplanted the noble sanities of the religion of the Jesus of the Gospels by a religion that is a hybrid of metaphysic and Manichæism, and which has dominated the Western church in all its forms to our own day.

Consider, further, the expression of the spiritual instinct in the most objective of all religious modes, mysticism! The other-worldliness, the vagueness, the elusiveness, the tranquillity, the sublime self-transcendence of mysticism constitute an almost perfect body of divinity. Mysticism contains within its highly etherealized substance more of reality, more of truth, more of the sweep, the majesty and the repose of the Eternal; it approximates more closely to the sacramental, the beatific coalescence of the finite spirit of man with the vast ocean of being, of light and of love, than any other form that the genius of religion has assumed in the course of its evolution. When we read the "Theologia Germanica," the letters of Samuel Rutherford, the writings of Madame Swetchine, the journal of John Wesley, "The Treasures of the Humble" by Maeterlinck, the writings of Böhme, Bernard of Clairvaux, William Law and Thomas Erskine, we feel, with an instinct whose cogency of demonstration is more trustworthy, more incontrovertible than the determinations of reason, that we are in the presence of truth and in touch with those who live with a beautiful naturalness and familiarity in abiding

communion with the everlasting realities. Again, however, even the fair history of mysticism is shadowed with the record of many and multi-form extravagances of thought and conduct. It has had, through all the phases of its development, an affinity for the morbid and has not seldom allied itself with the maladies of the soul which have their origin in abnormal self-containment, hysteria, nymphomania, eroticism, catalepsy, trance and hallucination.

Wherever we turn, the lesson is thrust upon us that the self is not sufficient unto itself, and that if it courts solitude and seclusion beyond measure it becomes sick with the inflammations, the fevers, the disorders that undue confinement generates, whether it be in the cell of a prison or in the dungeon of the soul.

Man's salvation lies in contact with the actual, in overleaping the metes and bounds of his spirit, that he may be in touch with the great, tonic outer world—with the hills, the streams and the meadows; with the air, the winds and the sky; with the sunshine, the storms and the showers; with the zephyrs of May and the blasts of December; with the energy, the poise, the vigor, the health, the

facts and the forces of Nature; with the struggles, the sorrows, the joys, the passions, the comedies, the tragedies, the smiles, the tears, the loves of humanity; with the vast, inscrutable over-world, the world of mystery and permanency, the world of the ideal, of the perfect, of spiritual completion, of the final harmony of all things, the ultimate concord of all spirits, the world of the real, of the Eternal, of immortal life and the Infinite God.

The capacities of the victorious life are within us, but the stuff, the content, the kinetic energy of the victorious life lie ever beyond us in the treasury of the universe, which imposes a usury of effort for every loan it grants us in the way of power and health and mastery. An hour with nature has in it more of therapeutic value, more of the glow and the zest of health, more of the bound and afflatus of life than one could find in the meditations of a whole day upon the euphemisms of our modern cults. Health is not a metaphysical puerility. It is a splendid activity of all the members, all the organs, all the functions of the body. It is not the equation of a divine theory. It is the equation of a divine ac-

tion. It is not an affair of indolent syllogisms. It is an affair of incessant and arduous contacts with the earth, the air and the wind. It was in the open world of nature that Richard Jefferies felt the élan, the inspiration, the intoxication of health and life and happiness that surge and vibrate in the incandescent prose of "The Story of My Heart." He was, like Stevenson, frail of body; yet through the constant exposure of his body, his nerves, his soul, to the whip and the sting, the verve and the vril that came sweeping toward him over the downs and across the sea—the rush of the winds, the clash of the storms and the jubilant air that dances on the hill-tops and frolics in the meadows—there coursed in his veins the blood of a Viking, laden with a superfluity of vigor, with an ecstasy of life.

What an air of health we breathe in when we read the "Romany Rye" of George Borrow, who loved nature with the consuming passion with which the bee loves the elder-flower! Borrow is the most superb and lordly figure of the open air in all the range of literature. Were he living to-day, we would not see him on the tennis court, or on the golf course, or on the football field. He

would have suffocated for lack of space and motion within the constricted boundaries imposed by our modern athletics. He would be on the highways, with chest inflated and arms swinging, moving with great strides over the fields and the meadows, up the hills and down the valleys, always in action, always contending with his stern but gracious antagonist, Nature, whose strength and joy and beauty he sought steadfastly through the long process of the years to make his own, always breathing the air in deep draughts and living out the days and the nights with a great elation in his heart. What a noble objectivity there was in his thinking and in his living! Through habitual converse with the heather and the moors and the stars, he entered, day by day, deeper and deeper into their spaciousness and freedom; so that he was more a king camping with the gypsies in the dingle than any monarch upon his throne, however large his kingdom, however lustrous the jewels in his crown.

Real health, health of body, health of mind, health of heart; the health that tingles, that glows, that leaps, that overflows with action and with joy, as a river at the flood overflows its banks; real

health as distinguished from the blanched semblance of health that modernity is seeking to find in the arcana of some mystical cult, a health which exults, not in the plenitude of its vigor, but in the absence of pain and freedom from aches—real health is to be found in the outer world, not merely in its diversions, its sports and its games, but, rather, through the contagion of the vitality and joy that abound in the wide spaces of the sky, in the rush of the breeze, in the soothing shade of the forest, in the lyric song of the running brook, in the measured beat of the ocean tides, in the blizzards that sweep the prairies, in the radiant light of the zenith sun by day and in the poetry, the repose, the mild splendor of the stars by night.

As we must find sanity of mind and body in the outer world, so also in the outer world, with its immensity and its vagueness, in the omnipresence and puissance of its laws, in its illimitable power and life and beauty, must we find our spiritual inspiration. Spirituality is not an intellectual formula. It is not a decalogue. It is not a liturgy, however august. The Roman mass is the most consummate drama of worship that has ever emerged from the yearning, the aspiration, the

contrition, the penitence and the adoration of the spirit of man prostrate before the Infinite. The Roman mass, however, though a noble aid to religion, is not religion. We cannot put the spirit into words, phrases, prayers, liturgies. "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." The temporal cannot contain the eternal. The relative cannot hold the absolute. The limited cannot embrace the limitless. The moment we say the Infinite is here, or there, though it were present, it has vanished with our speaking, affrighted by our temerity. "Then if any man shall say unto you, 'Lo, here is Christ, or there,' believe it not. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, 'He is in the desert,' go not forth. 'Behold He is in the secret chambers,' believe it not." These words, spoken by Jesus, though paradoxical, are wholly true.

If the sacramentarian tell you that the Eternal is in the confessional, in penance, in apostolic succession, in the infallible council of the church, or in the inerrable autocracy of a pope, "go thou not forth: He is not there." If the latitudinarian, the mystic, the Protestant tell you that He is in the

secret chambers, in the sanctuary of worship, in the Bible, in the mystical vision, in the transcendental rapture, in the ecstasy of prayer, "believe it not: He is not there."

The spirit is an atmosphere: it is a divine vagueness, a celestial aura that rests, an indefinable glory, upon land and sea, and that veils, with its eternal mystery, the features of life and love and beauty. The spirit is a vast emotion. It is the gentle pressure of the cosmic life upon our consciousness, our sensibilities and our love. We absorb the Infinite automatically, unconsciously, as we breathe in the air that sustains the life within our bodies. God reveals Himself to us and in us without articulation, without form or definition. We know Him without thinking. We sense Him without feeling. We love Him without being conscious of our love. We live and move and have our being in the Eternal, in the abysses of eternal love and goodness and beauty, as we live and move and have the being of our bodies in the atmosphere that enfolds the earth. He is the God of cloister and chapel and church, of prayer and fasting and penance. He is the God of the

immensities of space. He is the God of the constellations. He is the God of the mountains, the open sky, the rivers and the oceans. He is the God of the clouds, the rain, the lightnings and the thunders. He is the God of the dawn and the sunset. He is the God of the ocean's threnody and of the forest's symphony. He is the light, the melody and the glory of the world. He is the love that moves, a vast and shoreless sea of flame and passion, through all the range and sweep of the universe to its uttermost boundaries. He is the center and the circumference, the source, the process and the goal of all being, the mystery of all life, from its feeblest breath to its full diapason among the celestial hosts. He is the beauty that streams toward us in an infinite largess from sun, planet, tree, meadow and flower. He is the march and music of the spheres. And if we would possess Him—the Eternal One, the Spirit of Life and of Love, the great Companion, vague and glorious to infinity—we must live out in Him; we must transcend the narrow confines of our own self-habitation and live in Him with a godlike emotion that overleaps all forms, definitions, syllogisms, creeds, cults and churches; we must live

with the magnificent dignity of sonship in the vastness, the freedom and the light of God; and then He will be one with us, because we are one with Him.

CHAPTER XIV

PLAYING THE GAME

IN one of his essays, Huxley compares life to a game of chess, in which man is the protagonist and seated opposite to him is the great adversary, Destiny, silent, scrutinizing with searching eye every move that is made on the board, scrupulously fair and pitilessly exacting. There is an admirable fitness in this simile. Life is a game. It is a contest between the wit, the zeal and the enterprise of man on the one side and the obduracy and hostility of circumstance on the other side, and the trophy is felicity. The game is always difficult, but, though our antagonist is wary and an adept, the chances of victory are with us, unless we be wholly spineless and inept. Destiny is more than willing to be checkmated, but surrenders only to those who bring boldness and expertness to the game.

I suppose the deepest longing of our spirit is the longing for rest. We seek for the point of rest

in life as the eye seeks for the point of rest in a painting, the point in which all the motives and the details cohere and find their explanation. As the river moves toward the repose that awaits it in the profundities of the sea, so every thought and desire in us moves toward an ultimate equilibrium of spirit. And yet how strategic is the Providence that has ordained that the beatitude of inaction shall retreat with equal step before our advancing stride, as in the myth, so symbolic of life, Daphne ever recedes before the swift, pursuing step of Apollo!

Destiny humors us as the prudent nurse humors the child who asks for the delicacy it should not have, by projecting the pleasure a little into the future. It is marvelously expert in the art of procrastination. It speaks to us at night, when we are weary of the fray and exhausted by the battle, saying, "Peace cometh in the morning." The consummation devoutly to be wished always awaits us somewhere further along the way. Fortune is punctiliously honorable in the performance of her promise, but she believes in deferred payments. The word that leaps from her lips with the facility of long habit is "to-morrow." And when to-

morrow comes, again it is "to-morrow"! And when the morrow of to-morrow comes, still it is to-morrow"! The Wandering Jew is a universal type. We are all in search of a paradise we never find. It is somewhere, but ever ahead of us, hidden behind the veil of distance and secreted in the vague deeps of futurity. We reach the tree and lift up our hand to pluck the fruit of our dreams, but our vision has deceived us—the fruit is not there; it has vanished, and we behold it hanging from a branch beyond our grasp.

Life is not an oriental pleasure garden. It is an arena: it is a controversy, a strife, a battle; and it is this continuance of struggle, this stress of engagement, that constitutes our grandeur and our felicity. The strength of life is the exact equation of the strength of its antagonisms. Our opponents are turned, through conquest, into our allies. Our resistances, when subjugated, become our coadjutors. We rise to the heights of vision on the rungs of conquered doubts. We evolve heroism out of the unpromising substance of mastered fears, as the flower, by the alchemy of its nature, evolves beauty and fragrance out of the black soil in which it grows. The epochal mo-

ments of history are all moments of stupendous action. Erase the battles of Beth-horon, of Ai, of Salamis, of Marathon, of Milvian Bridge, of Tours, of Waterloo from the pages of history and we have erased everything that makes a civilization worthy of the name. We have erased the literature, the ethics and the religion of Israel. We have erased the philosophy, the oratory, the drama and the art of ancient Greece. We have erased the evangel, the morality, the inspiration, the hope, the religion and the church of Christ. And we have erased every paragraph, every phrase, every word of the world's history that speaks of the march of light, the growth of justice, the triumph of freedom and the ascent of the soul toward the Eternal.

Man has won his divinity in the storms. He is never so great as when, with the sword of the spirit in hand, he is swept away in the passion and the fury of the strife. The spirit of man is ignominious when it reclines, a voluptuary, on the couch of ease, sunk in somnolence while the world is battling in the sweat of its brow for "a place in the sun." The most pernicious foes of mankind are the effeminate apostles of an emas-

culated philosophy of life, who speak smooth sayings and who prophesy peace when there is no peace, and who weary the soul to the point of nausea with their flippant chatter about relaxation, repose and non-resistance, a non-resistance that is as immoral as it is invertebrate. The only repose that has in it any virtue, any nobility, is the repose that dwells in the heart of strife. The only calm that any man of royal mold would accept as guerdon is the calm that reigns, an angel of loveliness, in the heart of heroic action. And the only non-resistance that does not pronounce an indignant curse on its prophet and its disciple is the non-resistance that rules from the throne of honor. Man is never so superb as when he is contending, in the ferocity of a divine passion, for the luster of his manhood and the kingship of his soul. A tender, lyric charm envelops the Jesus who sat upon the Mount of the Beatitudes and opened His mouth, saying "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." However, the Jesus who awes, who exalts, who commands us is not the Jesus of the Beatitudes, but the Jesus who stood, a regal and magnificent presence, in the midst of the hostile multitude, and who, un-

suborned by expediency and undismayed by fear, pronounced judgment upon the malefactors in high places, saying, "Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees and Hypocrites, for ye devour widows' houses and for a pretense make long prayers; therefore, ye shall receive the greater damnation."

The Beatitudes reveal to us the sweetness, the grace, the tenderness, the exquisite femininity of the heart of Jesus; but the woes, the burdens, the anathemas, the judgments, the denunciations speak to us of His power, His courage, His masculine conscience, His majesty, His glorious, His Promethean divineness. The glory of this Man of mildness, of peace, waxes with the growing intensity and frenzy of the struggle. He is superb in the controversy with the powers of darkness, in the wilderness of the temptation. He is more superb in the august and bitter agony of Gethsemane. But He is most superb, most the perfect and consummate man, most manifestly the God, when He dies on Calvary alone, in the sorrow of a vast isolation, deserted by man and forsaken by the Infinite. How magnificently Jesus confirms, in life and in death, His virile, heroic words, "Think not that I am come to send peace

on earth. I came not to send peace, but a sword. The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent taketh it by force." In these piping, singing, simpering days of the theorists of universal peace, let us not forget that the Prince of Peace is the most martial figure in history, and that, clad in the armor of light and mailed in impenetrable holiness, he fought, a solitary combatant, with a divine prowess against the principalities of evil and the powers of sin.

Life is, indeed, a game—a pressing, straining, bruising game. And we must play the game in a spirit of fairness. The law of the game is a just and equal reciprocity. Our antagonist is an adept and conversant with every move and resource of the board. He will not surrender a bishop for a knight, or a queen for a rook. However artful we may be, we shall never catch him napping and off guard. Though his eye seem to be averted and his attention for the moment distracted, he is watching us; and he will exact the fullest price for every error, for every false move, whether it be the misplay of temerity or ignorance. Our invisible opponent is not only dexterous; he is severely cautious and intensely ethical. His

plays are immediate and based on a parity of values. We cannot buy or sell on margins in the game of life. The heart of destiny is lavish, but the distribution of its treasures is regulated by a parsimony of justice that cannot be evaded by our strategy, or wheedled into leniency by our cajoleries, or commuted on the petition of our tears. It is not permitted to us, either by the honor of the game or the dexterity of our adversary, to reap in the future a knight for the gift of a pawn in the present. The exchange is an exchange in kind and of equivalent values.

Nature is an infallible banker. She has evolved a system of accounts that excludes error with the absoluteness with which truth excludes falsehood. In her daybooks there are no lapses of accuracy, and on her ledgers the dividends that have been earned by the investments of the scholar or the saint are not credited to the gambler or the miser. Judas went with treachery and disloyalty in his heart to the treasury of the church for pelf. He sold himself for thirty pieces of silver. He earned his just dividend. He got the pelf he sought to assuage his avarice, with an added usury—shame for his disloyalty and ignominy for his turpitude.

Beethoven dedicated his noble gifts, his august genius, to the goddess of harmony. She rewarded him, not with the emoluments of material wealth, nor with the pleasant self-apotheosis that is the portion of immediate renown, nor with the intoxicating praise of the satellites who do obeisance to those who dwell upon the heights of discerned achievement, but with the more glorious rewards of the Sonata Pathetique, the Sinfonia Eroica, Leonore, Egmont, the Appassionata and the Symphonies of fadeless power and deathless loveliness. His life was burdened with a degrading poverty, his great heart submerged in a squalor that deepened with his days and in a sorrow that grew more poignant with his years. But the goddess of his devotion did not fail him. She crowned him with honors beyond his dreams, with an immortality of glory beyond his most audacious hopes.

Milton consecrated his stately powers—his culture of rare catholicity and aristocratic fineness; his soaring imagination, which expatiated with large sweep of wing through the celestial spaces; his noble sense of form and academic chastity—to the priestess of poetry and the muse of verse.

The divinity at whose shrine he worshiped did not bestow upon him the treasures of which she was not the custodian; she did not crown him with the distinction of the voyager, the soldier, the courtier, or the statesman—with the honors of Drake, or Dampier, or Falkland, or Cromwell—she bestowed upon him a royal reward that was in kind one with his royal passion, the triumph and the renown of the poet. Measured by the canon of gold, "Paradise Lost" was a sorry performance. Were we to capitalize Milton's gifts on the basis of the money value of five pounds, the sum paid for the greatest epic of modernity, Milton would represent an investment, an economic value to society, of one hundred English pounds, or five hundred American dollars. A wit once remarked to me, when I was commenting with some warmth of spirit on this indignity to one of the great accomplishments in the world of literature, that he thought the price of five pounds for "Paradise Lost" was excessive; that it was just five pounds too much, according to his standards of literary value. The wit, though irreverent, spoke more judicially than he knew, for the soul which woos beauty in her perfect form and in her highest

estate seeks no other recompense than her favor and her approbation. Beauty smiled upon Milton, for, measured by the canon of art, "Paradise Lost" is one of the most notable achievements of epic literature.

It were well for us to realize that our adversary is adroit and rigidly insistent upon the observance of the rules and ethics of the game. The knowledge that we are engaged in a contest in which equity is the referee, from whose decision there can be no appeal, would save many of us from biting disappointment and gnawing regret at the moment when we are figuring up the total sum of our winnings and the final worth of our victory. There can be no atonement for past errors by a lucky shot, no reparation for past failures by a chance stroke of fortune. We say to our masterful adversary, "We are playing the game for riches. We wish the power, the freedom, the mastery, the flattery, the luxury, the obsequiousness, the pleasures that follow in the footsteps of wealth." And if we play the game with assiduity, with patience, with caution and with skill, we shall win, with the certainty that the day succeeds the night, the stake for which we play; but we win

just that stake, the stake of riches. We do not win culture. We do not win refinement. We do not win nobility of character. We do not win high and beautiful ideals of life. We do not win urbanity of mien. We do not win amenity of manners. We win the sovereignty of wealth and the scepter that goes with wealth—a scepter, as we know to our sorrow, consonant with every undesirable quality of character, with arrogance, brutality, vulgarity, pomposity, pretension, bovinity of mind and frigidity of heart.

One might write an illuminative novel these days, whose theme would be the pathos of wealth—wealth with the pitiful blindness of ignorance, with the gaucherie of the parvenu, with a Rabelaisian grotesqueness of mind and manner; a sort of human dinosaur, floundering in the vast spaces of an unmanageable and unenlightened opulence. The irony of life speaks its climacteric word in the rich of this earth who encircle themselves with art to whose beauties their eyes are blind, who indulge their passion for ostentation by filling their libraries with literature clothed in costly bindings, a literature whose deeper meanings and, alas! whose superficial graces are hidden from their un-

down in our study in companionship and in converse with the monarchs of thought, the aristocrats of the world of letters! To live in their presence with a proper docility and a reverent responsiveness means enrichment and benediction. If we are hospitable to their message and sensitive to their guidance, they will gladly share with us their grandeur, their renown of soul and the illumination of their truth. They will share with us, "without money and without price," their culture, their refinement, their dignity, their tolerance and their beauty. By the hammer of wisdom and the chisel of truth, they will cut away the nodes and angles of our soul and will evoke, by the deftness of their sculpture, the symmetry, the fineness and the grace that are, by the decree of the Eternal, blessed latencies in every one of us. It was a felicity of definition born of a subtle instinct for the fitness and pertinency of things that gave to the great literature of the world its baptismal name, "*Litteræ humaniores*." Literature is humanizing. It emancipates us from the insularities of temperament, the dogmatisms of nationality, the prejudices of race and the bigotries of creed. It forms within us—not with precipi-

tate haste, but with the noble deliberateness that is ever the way of wisdom, line by line, precept by precept, here a little and there a little—the catholic mind and the universal vision. With firm and gentle touch, it models the soul in lines of strength, dignity and charm.

But if we make culture our summum bonum, we must not whimper, we must not murmur, over the meagerness of our fortune when our adversary bestows upon us the prize of the game. We must not accuse our antagonist of favoritism and call Fate a niggard because the invisible combatant against whom we have contended, while conceding to us the trophy of light we have sought and won, denies to us the trophy of wealth, with its power, its freedom, its luxury, its baronial houses, its magnificence, its hauteur, its liveries and its flunkies. The adversary allows us to nominate our own stake, and the reward is with him to give unto us according to our preference, our taste, our genius, our skill in the game. And as it is the mark of a welsher to repudiate the wager he has made and lost, so it is the mark of a man—it is the sign of a real and upright sportsman in the game of life—to play with fortitude and

fairness, and to accept with cheerfulness from the hand of Destiny, the silent player, the stipulated trophy, the stake we have nominated in the bond, whether it be the power and the comfort of riches or the dignity and the grace of intellectual culture.

It is also an imperative requirement of victory that we go into the strife with an invincible assurance in our heart, with the joy of the hazard of the game pulsing in our blood. The spirit is the winning factor in every sphere of effort, in the gymnasium, in the sports of the field, in the athletics of business, in literature, in art, in the forum, in the church. The spirit is the gist and marrow of all achievement. It is the push and the pull of all conquest. It is the soul of courage and the vital pith of the will. The spirit surmounts all obstacles, however difficult; overcomes all resistances, however obdurate, with the noble ease with which the buzzard, when a storm is raging, without a stroke of its wings, without a flutter of a feather, will soar from height to height to revel in the glare of the lightning, the rush of the wind and the torrent of the rain. The motionless triumph over mountain and valley, over

space and storm, by the buzzard is hidden from the curious eye of science. Its mastery is the secret of the buzzard. The overcoming power of the spirit likewise evades the penetrative vision of psychology. It is a mystery. It is cryptic in its essence. It is esoteric in its processes. It dwells in the nerve, the imagination, the will of one man and he sweeps on, as in the arms of the wind, toward his goal. Another man, confident in his own genius, declines the spirit's inspirations and, however richly he may be endowed with the properties of health and strength and the powers of the intellect, however bounteously he may be favored with propitious circumstances, he limps and staggers over his burden and finally sinks, defeated, by the wayside. The spirit is the one element of caprice in destiny. It is not of the stuff and substance of our being; it is not of the constitution of personality: it is a power not ourselves; it is the God within, who visits us only on our invitation and who stays only by our insistence. "The wind bloweth where it listeth and thou hearest the sound thereof but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the spirit."

The great career of Wellington, a career of unbroken successes and uninterrupted victories, is not explained by the preëminency of his martial gifts. He was not comparable in the reach and intuition of intellect, in the energy, the strategy, the tactics of warfare, with his illustrious antagonist. Wellington was the conqueror of Napoleon, not because he was more versed in the wisdom and the technique of the game, but, rather, for the reason that he was rich in that which counts more than genius, more than circumstance, more than efficiency, in the final victory—the power, the passion, the enthusiasm of the spirit.

John Wesley was, if measured by the standard of sheer intellectuality, of academic culture and religious scholarship, or by the standard of the mass and cogency of personality, or by the standard of the power and mastery of eloquence, a minor figure in the Anglican Communion. In equipment of faculty, in the compass, the enlargement and the polish of learning, he cannot be ranked in the same category with men of the stamp of John Smith, Nathanael Culverwel, Isaac Barrow and John Tillotson. Yet "The Select Discourses" of Smith, "The Elegant and Learned Dis-

course on the Light of Nature" of Culverwel, the prose of Barrow—the most magnificent and stately prose of a day when writing was an art and not a profession—and the suave, Ciceronian eloquence of Tillotson are known only to the few students who detour into the solitudes of literature, while the beat of Wesley's heart is felt to the farthest limits of our planet, wherever the pioneers of Christianity, the missionaries of the cross, have gone. The explanation of Wesley's remarkable domination of the religious thought of his age, and all succeeding ages, is that he was aglow with the inspiration that gives universality to whatever medium it inhabits, whether it be the hymn, "Nearer, My God, to Thee," of Sarah Flower Adams, the song of Baroness Nairne, "Land o' the Leal," Wordsworth's "Ode on the Intimations of Immortality," "In Verdure Clad" by Haydn, "The Melody in F" by Rubinstein, the Potion motive in "Tristan and Isolde," or the Spear motive in "Parsifal"—the inspiration of the spirit, the spirit of mystery and of power; the spirit that is in us, but not of us; the spirit without whose fire and heat and conflagration our gift is like a jewel without the light of the sun to evoke its color

and its beauty, like a body uninhabited, unenergized and unilluminated by a soul.

It is the spirit that conquers. It is the divine gusto that drives us on, that sustains us when we are weary, that cheers us when we are discouraged, that urges the steel home to its mark in the blow that wins success. It is the impulsion of the talent. It is the sovereign of circumstance. It sings in Milton's soul, an apostrophe to light, out of the black abyss of the night in which his vision was forever imprisoned. It floods the heart of Cervantes with the light of its inspirations and the sunglow of its hopes, and he conceives and gives body and form to Don Quixote de la Mancha, who, though gestated and fashioned in the gloom and the shadow of the prison, has brought an amused smile to the lips and gayety to the hearts of all who have followed him in his wild idealisms, in his grotesque adventures with his fair and beautiful Dulcinea, his furious and disastrous engagement with the windmill, his fantastical dreams, his tipsy utopias, his delicious oddities of ambition and of enterprise. It fortifies, with a celestial indomitability, the heart of Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles, exalting his zeal and mag-

nifying his courage as the struggle grows in severity and violence. His apostolate was an Odyssey of perils on land and sea, of woes, of indignities, of scourgings, of castigations, of scoffings, of insults, heartaches and tears; but he lived and labored and founded churches in Corinth, in Ephesus, in Thessalonica, in Rome, in the various cities of Phrygia, Cilicia, Galatia, in Macedonia and Greece; he suffered; he died, a conqueror—and more than a conqueror—because he was filled, urged on, coerced, innerved by the spirit, the mighty combatant who rules destiny, as the sun rules the day.

If we would play the game of life; if we would play it in the great way; if we would play it with a splendid dash and a fine abandon; if we would smite with vigor, and when smitten in return murmur not over the ill fortune of battle and complain not because of the stress of our foe and the pain of our wounds; if in the moment of seeming defeat we would strike with a courage and a force born of the assurance of ultimate victory; if we would have faith in the dayspring even when the shadows of the night are falling; if we would play the game, the glorious, divine

game of life, not as cravens, as slackers, as shirkers, but as men, valiant men and royal sportsmen, as the saints, visible or invisible, as the heroes, illustrious or obscure, of every age and every land, have played it, with *éclat*, with audacity, with a glow in the heart, with the fire and ardor of victory in our blood—then we must contend against our strong and subtle adversary, not only with the might of our talent, but in the white heat of the spirit—the spirit that is to man what the sun is to the earth, life, light, splendor, triumph!

CHAPTER XV

PRESENTNESS

THE saying of Wordsworth, "The child is the father of the man," is a paradox as true as it is striking. It is one of those flashes of genius that at first bewilder us by their temerity and then illumine us by their veridicalness. The child is the father of the man in his perfect hour of normality. The normal man in the early forenoon of life is simple, natural, self-expressive, unconstrained by expediency in his affections and undeterred in speech, in manner and in conduct by petty circumspections. These are all qualities of childhood in efflorescence.

The man whose spiritual consciousness has not been impaired by voluptuousness of habit, the degenerate issue of an obese prosperity, or by a cynical materiality of intellect, often the sequent of penury of fortune, is, in the full noon of his powers, his splendidly vital days, intensely mystical and ardently addicted to the supernatural.

Whether he be a theist, a deist, a pantheist, or an agnostic, he feels within him a hunger, an inappeasable affinity, for the Eternal. His spirit is a vast interrogation. He implores the Sphinx, the silent one, the custodian of the secrets of earth and sky, to solve the riddles so alluring and so elusive, the riddles of matter and spirit, of consciousness and self-consciousness, of life and love, of suffering and death, of the why and the whence and the whither. And though the Sphinx answer not, undismayed by the frigid silence, he ceases not, in the privacy of his soul, to importune the mute guardian of the everlasting mystery, and waits, with a brave hope in his heart, for the solution of the great enigma. The supernatural is also the native element of childhood. The early days are days of marvel—days lived in a mystical world of fancy and imagination, a world everywhere invaded by the miraculous and quivering with the spirit of wonder, a world of genii and elves and fairies and goblins, in which Jack the Giant Killer, Prince Charming, Little Red Riding-hood and Cinderella are as vivid and as real as are the Knights of the Round Table, Sir Launcelot, Sir Galahad, Sir Gawain and Sir Percival,

with their marvelously caparisoned steeds, their terrific combats, their spectacular tournaments at Caerleon, King Arthur's court, to the chivalrous imagination of youth.

But I think perhaps the most remarkable wisdom of life that emerges out of the nascent instinct of childhood for the guidance of our maturity is to be found in its practicalness, in the presentness of its faculties and interests. The child lives in the immediate sensation and in the actual environment. To the sensibility and consciousness of the dawn of our day, life is centered in the proximate and concrete, and not in some remote, abstract world—in the substantial pleasure of the moment, and not in the insubstantial pleasure of futurity. The child understands neither the logic of deferred felicity nor the wisdom of subordinating the lesser, present pleasure to the larger, distant pleasure. In the nursery with its dolls; in its wild flight over moor and dale and meadow; in the competition and joy of its games; in its urgency to action; in its clamor for adventure; in its passion for freedom; in its appetency for life, for sympathy, for comradeship, for love—the kingdom of heaven is ever at

hand for the child. It lives in its minute, but intensely actual, world with the full impact of its senses and the undiminished energy of its soul. With a vivid immediateness of desire it invests the whole wealth and content of its being in the proximate experience, in the present delight.

This presentness of thought and interest is the unfailing mark of perfect normality. The man who lives in largest amplitude, in fullest opulence, in highest efficiency, is the man who lives with most entire concentration of his powers in the experience, the problem and the situation with which he is at each moment confronted. The day of salvation is always now. Life is fugitive, and so is opportunity. We must catch the felicities of life on the wing. "Day unto day uttereth speech." The transient eloquence of to-day which has escaped our hearing by reason of inattention cannot be recovered, even if in the zeal of contrition we listen with a more devout intentness to the eloquence that may fall from the lips of the morrow. The time spirit never repeats the same counsel of wisdom with the same tone of voice and with quite the same emphasis. The word that was spoken years ago with the gentle-

ness of love and which, through absence of spirit, we heard not, and therefore could not heed, may return to us in the reverberations of appalling thunder. It is Novalis, I think, who says, with a fine pregnancy of phrase, "Light rejected returns as lightning." If we listen with docility and reverence to the ministry of the day as it sweeps by us on swift wings in its unceasing flight, it will speak to us in soft tones, with its own sweet cadence, words of light and kindliness. But if, through heedlessness, we are inhospitable, the lost counsel will, upon some future day, return to us in the form of judgment and of penance.

The opportunities of life are as countless as the grains of sand upon the seashore, but they are never recurrent. The deed of commission is a positive permanency. What is written is written. The deed of omission is a negative permanency. The lost chance, the lost day, the lost hour, the lost vision, the lost love, is gone, and forever gone. The recovery of the scorned beatitude lies as far beyond the command of our will as the dog star Sirius lies beyond the touch of our finger tips. Each experience that comes to us is less potent with benefactions of power, of joy, of vic-

triumph of the future—a triumph which, in the great majority of instances, is as spectral as the dream in which it has its origin.

I have in mind a dear friend of my early days, whose heart was as fair as summer, whose soul was, in the virtue of personal honor, as white as snow, but whose career, just at the hour when its task seemed nobly and finely accomplished, culminated in a tragedy of dishonor, like the sun which has swept through the tranquil sky of a perfect day to couch in the fuliginous heart of the storm that hovers, angry and menacing, beyond the western horizon. His life in the business world, in the church, in the home, was a theme of general comment because of the loftiness of his ideals and the fine texture of his conduct. His great heart so abounded in love, so overflowed with the virtue of kindness, that there was no room in it to harbor a petty vice, a mean desire, an ignominious purpose. His record, in the high qualities of manhood, integrity, fortitude, fealty and chivalry, was untarnished by a fault and unsullied by the stain of a single infirmity. He was loved by those privileged to know him with the intimacy of friendship, and in the revealing pri-

vacy of the life of the home, with a love, so far as my observation goes, unique in the qualities of loyalty and fervor. And yet this great spirit made his exit from the stage of time shadowed with an infamy that had its incitement in an ambition too vast for his powers and too subtle for his talents. I instance this catastrophe that overtook a nature fitted by its rich endowment of virtues and exquisite qualities of mind and heart for a worthy accomplishment and an honorable destiny, because it is typical, because I believe that intemperate expectancy is the invisible curse that dims, far beyond the measure of our knowing, the luster of integrity and blights the joy of the heart.

That man is favored by the gods who learns that the real success of life is far more an affair of the fine mechanism and the presentness of personality than an affair of the mass and the spectacularity of the enterprise in which he is engaged. There is a notable beauty in the ambition that proportions the task to the talent, and that realizes its dream in sweet sobriety amid modest circumstances and manageable conditions.

The victorious men are not the men who, by

a certain mundane quality of genius, finesse of temperament and fortuity of situation, command a large space in the admiration and the enterprise of the world. The victorious men are the men who work with the power, the passion and the presentness of genius in whatever sphere may be allotted to them, whether large or small, whether the bench of the cobbler or the forum of the orator, whether a garret or a mansion, whether grinding lenses or carving a statue, whether the Portiuncula at Assisi or the Duomo at Florence.

George Herbert, though noble born and illustrious among the distinguished by the patent of a long and famed ancestry, devoted his gifts to the church and lived his latter days in the solitude and obscurity of the parish of Wilts in England. His labors in the diminutive parish church at Bemerton were brief—brief as the days of the public ministry of his Master, whom he loved with the love of a great consecration. He pondered upon the divine mysteries in silence. He intoned the liturgy of his devotion withdrawn from the world. He communed with the Eternal amid the solitude of his church and in the yet pro-

founder solitude of his heart. And how wonderful were his thoughts, how tender the melody and the message of his song! What a divinity rests forever upon his words, his spirit and his presence! He lived in loneliness and in presentness with the church. He lived in retirement and in presentness with his parishioners, singing the song of the nightingale to an audience of sparrows. He lived in obscurity and presentness with God. And yet he is the most visible, the most outstanding, the most revered figure in the national church of the England of his age. Who wore the purple in his day? Who were the bishops who ruled over the sees of Salisbury, Ely, Lincoln, Durham, Worcester, London? Who were the bishops of the bishops, the archbishops of Canterbury and York? Who were the celebrated divines, the canons, the deans, the prebendaries that preached the gospel of "Jesus Christ and Him crucified," surrounded by the pomp and encircled by the fashion of the times, in the cathedrals of St. Paul and Westminster; the doctors of divinity who taught in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge? They are all unremembered, lost in the unread pages of history. But George Herbert

lives for all time in his "Sacred Poems and Private Ejaculations," in the gentle, pensive, brooding divinity of his "Priest to the Temple."

Again, we have an illuminative example of the power of the talent to affirm itself with a splendid fullness of energy despite the constriction of the space assigned to it by fortune in the stable fame and the wide renown of Matthew Arnold. It would be difficult to duplicate in the history of modern letters a more pathetic disproportion between the majesty of the gift and the meagerness of the opportunity than we observe in the life of Arnold, who maintains with the ease of genius the position of primacy among the critics of England. It makes one question, not only the justice, but even more the sanity of the world, when one thinks of this great, sensitive spirit, inspired with ideals of art and of life whose exceeding fineness gave them a cutting edge, wasting the priceless treasure of his talents in catechising the children of the board schools of Great Britain concerning the puerilities of geography, of history, of grammar. His valiant heart often must have quivered with indignation when he contrasted the riches which an uncritical spirit awarded to medioc-

rity as its portion with the indigence that destiny assigned as the appropriate and just recompense for his superlative gift of literary criticism, the high, far-sweeping vision of his spirit, the finished grace of his verse and the subtle charm of his prose.

But doubtless there is a divine method in the madness of destiny and in the purblindness of man to the presence and the majesty of talent. The rewards of riches, the luxury of recognition and applause, the splendor of entourage—these are not the vital things: these do not constitute the ultimate greatness of the soul: these do not crown the talent and the work of man with a distinction that survives the passing day. The delicacy of the mechanism of our gift, the presentness of faculty, passion and interest—these are the matters of supreme importance: these are the indispensable elements of the great life: these are the unfailing conditions of a high, a noble, a permanent success. This is the immortality of Matthew Arnold. He met life; he met literature; he met truth; he met duty; he met the apocalypse of nature and the ministry of beauty with an exquisite fineness of faculty, with a noble presentness of enthusiasm

—the pristine, naïve enthusiasm of the child. And his reward, though less convenient and less easily convertible into the comfort of life than was the portion of many of lesser endowment in his day, is more enduring. His terrestrial kingdom was the kingdom of a journeyman; his stipend was the stipend of a banker's clerk; but his gift was the gift of a master, and he wears the crown of a just celebrity. He belongs with the hierarchy of the leaders, and his renown touches the circumference of the world of culture. The great lesson of inspiration that we learn from the lives of George Herbert and Matthew Arnold, and the lives of countless others of the great, though unrewarded, spirits of this world, is that the dignity and the beauty of life are not conditioned by the magnitude of the undertaking, or by the emolument of riches or popularity, but by fineness of faculty and immediacy of interest.

Furthermore, if we would live with the fullest power and the largest consequence, it is imperative that we should live in the actual world with directness of vision and presentness of interest. As we dissipate the force and waste the opportunity of life by inordinate anticipation, so we ex-

haust the vigor of the soul's impact and impair the serviceableness of our talents by our intemperate idealisms. We may be so absent in our dreams, our theories, our heaven-kissing transcendentalism, as to unfit ourselves for rational contact with the actual problems—the problems of poverty, of ignorance, of suffering, of vice, of crime, of moral anarchy, of militancy—that confront us on this earth wherever we turn. We may bathe our sword so long in the light of the eternities that our arm becomes palsied by the weight of our weapon, and our light-bathed sword becomes useless because of the suspended function of the arm that should wield it on behalf of humanity and God in the furious combat that is forever waging between the angels of light and the powers of darkness. We may become so inebriated with the light air of the towering peaks of thought that, like a man reeling with excess of wine, we can no longer coördinate our faculties and adjust our interests to life as we find it at the base of the hills.

One of the most pernicious foes of human well-being is the dreamer who absents himself from the storm and stress, the strain and din of bat-

tle, the hunger and thirst of the world, and who lives on the heights, wasting the divine forces of his spirit in star gazing, in spinning out of his dream-drunk imagination theories of redemption that might have pertinency in relation to the ethereal denizens of the sun, but which have no pertinency whatever in relation to the flesh-burdened, the poverty-ridden, the passion-driven, the matter-crazed humanity of this earth. Extremes meet. The most obdurate resisters of the spirit of progress are separated by the width of the world, the idealists of holiness and the realists of evil—the realists of evil, who are so habituated to the soot and the grime of the lowlands that they will not climb the mountain sides to ennoble their spirits with the vision of the eternities which greet us only when we stand upon the heights; the idealists of holiness, who are so overwhelmed with the splendor and the beauty of the mountain top, so entranced with the grace and the glory of the dream, so drugged with the inertia of the beatific vision, that when they return to the real world, the world of actual men and women, of actual hunger and need, of actual sorrow and strife, of actual travail and suffering and

sin, they wander about, listless and supine, the power of redemption wholly gone out of them. As the strength fled from the muscles and sinews of Samson when his locks were shorn, they have been unmanned by the Delilah of the rhapsodical dream.

The ideal is the heaven of the soul. It is our redemption. It is the force of levitation that lifts us high about the dissonances, the anarchies and the vulgarities that smother the life and shadow the joy of the soul, and that brings us into concord with the light and beauty of the Infinite. Man never rises above the elevation that his spirit reaches in its highest hour of visitation. The ideal is our savior in every realm of life. It is the savior of the intellect. It is the savior of the conscience. It is the savior of the heart. It is the savior of the soul of beauty, in fiction, in sculpture, in speech, in song, in symphony, in worship and in the more practical matter of conduct. The ideal is to the art and the practice of life what the sky is to the earth, its light, its inspiration, its freedom, its joy and its loveliness.

But if we lose ourselves in the slumbrous intoxication of the ideal; if we drink too frequently

of history, of music and of song, and with all the lords of light who dwell in magisterial grandeur on Mount Parnassus; to commune with the seers and the psalmists, who reign in a splendor of immortality upon Mount Zion; to commune with the presences of light and loveliness, with the adepts of the occult, with the dreamers and the mystics, and, above all, with the arch-mystics, the supreme initiates of wisdom, the sovereign redeemers of the ages. But we may not abide long upon the heights of vision and of rapture without imperiling our sanity and dwarfing the faculties that correlate us with the labors, the burdens, the doubts, the fears, the sorrows, the tears, the bitter and the sweet actualities of this earth "that groaneth in travail until now, waiting for the redemption of its body."

We are, by the decree of the Eternal, in conjunction, for this terrestrial incarnation at least, with matter, with the sights and sounds of the physical earth, with forest and field and sea and sky; with man—man in his poverty, suffering, struggle, life and death. And if we would, with a divine self-sacrifice and a noble heroism, do our part in lifting this planet, with its priceless freight-

age of humanity, nearer to its ideal destiny, nearer to the perfection we behold in our dreams on the mountain top, nearer to the white eternities, nearer to God, we must, in imitation of the great Master, after our high moments of transfiguration upon the peaks, descend to the base of the hill and make the actual world our permanent dwelling place. With a glorious presentness of vision and of effort, we must illumine the darkness of the world with the light of our spirits and mitigate the burdens and the sorrows of humanity with gracious deeds and tender ministries born of the love of our heart.

CHAPTER XVI

THE SACRAMENT OF LOVE

It is strange that love, the supreme sanctity, should not only be denied its rightful priority, but that it should even be denied position among the sacraments of Christianity. The confession of sin has been thought worthy the honors of a sacrament. The prayers of the penitent and the contritions of the sinner are of such admirable and divine holiness as to crown penance with sacramental dignity. But, according to the standards of divinity, both in the Romanist and the Protestant communions, love, though the first-born of the Infinite, belongs with the secularities. Our contritions, our tears, our dirges are sacrosanct and merit, by reason of their superfine spirituality—a spirituality, I imagine, proportioned to their dismalness—primacy among the virtues of the church. Love, however, may not be ranked among the virtues deserving canonization. It has

no right to consort with the holy things, according to the ethics of Romanism. It has no habitation in the heart of God, if we should take one of the most important symbols of Protestant Christianity as our instructor in the wisdom of the Eternal. The Westminster confession of faith, in its definition of God, shows its reverence for love as an attribute of divinity by bestowing upon it the sad emphasis of exclusion. The Westminster divines, however truculent may have been their hatred of the theology, the ceremonialism, the monastic orders and the papacy of Rome, were of entire oneness of mind with their bitter ecclesiastical antagonist in scorning the claim of love to be enrolled among the divinities. Love has lived out its bleak and lusterless days, a modest and veiled presence, in the obscure corners of Christian theology and in the somber crypts of the Christian church. This fair-visaged, gracious, soft-voiced angel of the eternities has suffered an equality of indignity from monk and presbyter. The excellencies and charms of love have, in every age, been more venerated by the pagan muse of Parnassus than by the haloed saint of Zion.

This scorn of the highest virtue of divinity is

one of the impenetrable enigmas of the psychology of the church, since Christ, its founder, was Himself the incarnation of the spirit of love. The fatuity with which the church has contemned love as a revelation of God and as a force for the exaltation and enthronement of humanity will be, to future ages, one of the wonders of the world. The church is, without question, of all institutions that bear upon the culture and well-being of mankind, the institution the most benign in its mission, and the most vital evangel of the ideals and the ethics that make for the perfection and the felicity of life. But one marvels, with a perplexity of mind that deepens with reflection, over its credulity and incredulity, its faith in ceremonial theurgy and the magic of dogma; its unfaith in love, the meek redeemer, the power of God unto salvation, the mighty conqueror of mankind. The magistracy of the church over the hearts and the consciences of men is the outstanding miracle of time. In its parsimony of love, it has wounded the heart of God; and yet, notwithstanding its disloyalty to the spirit of love, the imperium in imperio, the divinity within divinity, it has commanded the reverence and the devotion of men.

THE SACRAMENT OF LOVE 229

However, "the hour of redemption draweth nigh." Love, with soft and persistent step, is moving toward its own kingdom. The honors of the sacrament denied by the priesthood of the church are, progressively, being conferred upon it by the one priesthood which officiates in the prerogatives of an apostolate derived, not from an ancient bishop, but from the Ancient of days, the priesthood of humanity. The process of canonization is going steadily forward in school, in church and in state, in letters, in jurisprudence, in politics, in art, in religion and in worship; and in due time, at no distant day, our queen of love, our madonna of the eternities, will rule in absolute sway over her proper empire, the heart of mankind.

Love is religion. It is the center and the circumference, the warp and woof, the essence and the substance, of divinity. A great seer, an adept in the mysteries hidden from the ordinary vision of mortals, by long and intimate converse with eternal things through prayer and meditation, tells us—and his words find confirmation in our hearts through an apprehension more divine than the logic of the intellect—that God is love. This

succinct revelation is the final word of the Eternal to humanity, and it is pregnant with unutterable ministries of light and life and hope. It banishes, with a ruthless logic, the notion that God is a metaphysical theorem and that salvation is synonymous with an intellectual assent to a scholastic definition.

The church has taught and acted on the assumption that religion is as exclusively an affair of the pure intellect as geometry or astronomy. The theology of Romanist and Protestant alike is founded on the determinations of reason, and not on the emotions of the heart—with this difference, that the intellectualism of Rome is more magnanimous than the intellectualism of Geneva, or of Augsburg. The Protestant church says to the individual communicant, "You must believe in the divinity of Christ." If the communicant answer, "This mystery is beyond my understanding: it is too deep for me," the church of the Reformation still insists upon the intellectual affirmation of this dogma by the communicant. The Protestant church is wholly logical in the inexorableness of its command because, according to its frigid interpretation of Christianity, redemp-

tion is founded upon an intellectual formula. The church of Rome says to its candidate for confirmation, "You must believe in the divinity of Christ." And when the candidate, overwhelmed with the consciousness of his spiritual darkness, answers, "I do not understand," the church, with a fine and complacent accommodation, says, "Well, that does not matter. The explicit faith, the faith of knowledge and of understanding, is with the church. The measure of your obligation is implicit faith, the faith of trust and dependency. All you need to do is to have an implicit faith in the explicit faith of the church, and your salvation is assured." This is not a very noble way, but it is certainly a swift and smooth way to the City of God. The advantage of it is that it simplifies enormously the problem of salvation. The disadvantage of it is that it imprisons the intellect, blunts the conscience and retards the growth of the soul. I do not write these words in criticism of the great institution to which we are all indebted beyond the power of gratitude to repay. I admire the Roman church for the munificent mercy of its theology, as I delight in the ornateness of its ritual and the impressive dignity of its mass.

Happily, the cardinal concern of religion is not with the intellect, but with the heart. God is love. To love and to live in love; to love nature and to love man; to live in the love of nature; to live in the love of man—this is religion: this is worship in the finality of its excellence, the completion of its beauty. We are never so near to the Infinite; we are never so completely, so indivisibly one with the Eternal, as when we are living with a noble spaciousness and a consuming passion in the simple human loves of our heart. Love is the celestial vision of God. Love is the supernal instinct with which we feel God. It is the freedom of God within our will. It is the joy of God within our heart. It is the worship of God within our spirit. When we live in the love of father or mother, sister or brother, or friend; when we are lost and submerged in the ineffable passion, in the pulsing ardor of our love for the beloved, we are living in God. Divine love is not one love and human love another love. They are one and indivisible, of the same origin and essence. Human love is divine love integrated with the heart of man. Divine love is human love integrated with the heart of God. Love is, in the sphere of

the spirit, the ultimate sacrament. It is a sacrament of divine light, a sacrament of divine beauty, a sacrament of divine praise. Some future day, when man, quickened by the inner motions of the spirit, or sufficiently illumined by the wisdom that falls from the lips of Time, the one patient and inerrant teacher, awakens to a realization of the marvelous simplicity of the revelation of the Eternal in the personality of the Jesus of history, he will live and exult in God with the freedom, with the spontaneity, with the naturalness, with the perfect unconsciousness with which the normal spirit lives and exults in its element, the normal body. He will know, then, that God is not a definition of the intellect, a formula of reason. He will know that God is the great, sweet, vague spirit of the universe; that He is love, and that to abide in love is to abide in the knowledge of God; that to rejoice in love is to worship God with highest reverence and supremest praise.

And just for the reason that the sacrament of love is the final revelation of God, it is the final righteousness of man. It is not only the consummation; it is the source of law. It is the criterion of conduct and the touchstone of morality. The

holiness of the heart is the only holiness endued with a strength adequate to the moral redemption of the individual and of humanity, that can bend the heavens to the earth and lift the earth to heights where it is, in its vibrations, in its motions and in its passions, one with the fair perfection and the unblemished loveliness of the Infinite.

Where shall we turn for the counsels of wisdom to regulate us in the conduct of life, if not to the oracle of love which prophesies in the temple of the heart? We are told that we must look for moral guidance, for the canon of thought and the standard of conduct, for the vision that will reveal to us the way of righteousness, for the ideals that will ennoble our character and deify our actions, to tradition, to the ethical norms of society, to the consent of the nations, to the custom and usage of civilization. But, alas! tradition varies with times and seasons, with countries, nationalities and races. One age affirms as moral, as noble, as holy, as divine, the ideal, the attitude, the conduct that a later age rebukes as evil and condemns to infamy. Tradition demanded the release of Barabbas, the malefactor. The same tradition crucified the gentlest soul that ever shed a

ray of light upon the way of man shadowed with sorrow and with sin. The communal conscience of Athens put the cup of hemlock to the lips of Socrates. And twenty centuries later, the conscience of the people, the morality of the multitude sent Servetus to the stake because of his heretical theories regarding the mystery of the Trinity. The dominant tradition of Catholic Europe of the fifteenth century sanctioned the massacre of St. Bartholomew and the unspeakable cruelties and horrors of the Inquisition. The conscience of Protestantism, inflamed with the blood lust of dogma, with an equal hate and an equal indifference to justice, imposed innumerable tortures and the penalty of death upon the Catholic because he was unorthodox by way of excess, and upon the Quaker because he was unorthodox by way of deficiency. The stern and somber conscience of the Puritans, in an age whose bigotry lent itself easily to the sophistries of credulity, instigated them to treat with an insanity of rigor the unfortunate women who were suspected of soothsaying and sorcery, and to enact the Blue Laws, which robed life in a monastic gloom and made it an offense for a man to indulge in the sweet ameni-

ties and to manifest the simple affections of home life on the Sabbath.

When we scrutinize the moral norm of the average man, the conception of the good and the beautiful of the man in the street, of our own day, the result of our scrutiny does not minister to pride. It does not reveal a standard of honor, of purity, of truth, of justice, acceptable to the man of fine ideals and delicate sensibilities. The public conscience is the conscience of the Chauvinist, the Philistine, the Hun. The public taste is a taste that revels in the abnormalities, the horrors, the lubricities, the scandals, the moral and emotional pathologies of society. The national decalogue of Germany—not the decalogue merely of its criminals and its soldier caste, its thugs and its underworld, but the decalogue of its Kaiser, its statesmen, its artists, its *littérateurs*, its professors, its doctors of divinity; the men who rule in the places of distinction in the church, the deans, canons, bishops, archbishops, cardinals—the national decalogue of Germany gives its sanction to the vice of cowardice, the unchivalrous treatment of non-combatants, the unarmed man, the weak and aged woman, and the little child, by

the soldier clad in shining armor and holding the sword of steel in his mailed fist; gives its sanction to a vice yet more detestable than cowardice, the vice of perfidy, of the broken pledge and the violated troth.

The conscience of the world, the ethos of humanity at large, as we behold it within the bounds of the civilization of these latter days, neither compels our admiration by its nobility nor atones for its deficient nobility by its gentleness and grace. The canon by which we measure prosperity is largely a physical canon. We reward with lavish emolument the man who provides for our physical comfort. The prosperous men, the men of power and triumph, in America, in England, in France and in Germany, are the brewers, the packers, the merchants, the stockbrokers, the shipbuilders, the manufacturers, the bankers and the landowners. The large stipends have not gone and do not go to compensate the men of science and of literature, such as Herbert Spencer, Huxley, Emerson, Lowell, Pater; the poets, Patmore, Swinburne, Francis Thompson, Sydney Lanier; the artists, Blake, Turner, Innes; the masters, the principals, the presidents of schools, colleges and

universities, Thomas Arnold of Rugby, Jowett of Balliol and Woolsey of Yale; the men of the spirit, the prophets of righteousness, Frederick Robertson, Frederick Denison Maurice, Henry Ward Beecher and Phillips Brooks. The large stipends have gone and still go to the men with a talent, with a genius, for physical interests and material enterprise—to the sellers of bonds and stocks, the heads of industrial institutions, the underwriters of international loans, the speculators in gold and silver mines, the promoters of real estate and commercial syndicates.

Observe, again, the drama, the opera, the novel, the newspaper of our day! Surely the study of these institutions of democratic culture does not leave upon one's mind an impression of the refinement and trustworthiness of the tastes of the commonalty. The drama is trivial, morbid, erotic. The opera is sensuous, hysterical, and its dominant note is lubricity. The one tyrannical and hypnotic theme of the modern novel is the eternal triangle. Its morality is the morality of the Philistine, and its literary style is more conspicuous for its slovenliness, its crudity and its formlessness than for its dignity and charm. Excise from the

pages of the newspaper the interests of sport, the horrors of fire, flood and famine, the catastrophes of war, the vulgar scandals of the day, in the political world, in society and in the home; the inane and coarse cartoons, not even amusing in their absurdity and grotesqueness; the arts and crafts of the boudoir; the riot of cheap wit; the banalities of the professional writers of the columns that deal with physical culture and lay therapeutics; the daily record of finance, the mutations of stocks and bonds—and after these various and drastic excisions, how little remains that has value for life, that sweetens the day with pleasant thoughts, that gives a tonic, a fillip, to the halting fortitude or the limping chivalry, that inspires one to go forth to fight the battle of life with a nobler zeal, with a higher buoyancy of nerve and of heart! The more we study humanity—its morals, its preferences, its tastes—as it is laid bare to view by modern history, literature, the drama, the newspapers and by daily communion and habitual contact, the more conscious we shall be of its enormous potentialities, the more we shall pity it, love it, serve it, minister to its need; and the less disposed we shall be to consult it as a prophet of

holiness, a critic of conduct, an oracle of beauty in life, in thought or in manners.

There is only one authoritative standard of the beautiful life, of the conduct of pertinent fineness and loveliness, and that is the standard of the individual conscience illumined by the light of sacramental love. I mean by "sacramental love" the love that is instinct with the passion of otherness, whose motive is not self-magnification, but, rather, the redemption and enrichment of the world. The love that is sacrosanct by reason of its divine disinterestedness, its noble self-detachment, is found with constancy only in the great hearts of the world, in the hearts of St. John, St. Paul, St. Francis, Fénelon and Jesus. But it rises to the surface in lesser hearts in the luminous hours of life, in the hours of searching sorrow, in the hours when the world's piteous need and wretched plight evoke the divinity that abides, a latency, in every one of us, beneath the débris of the thoughts and emotions born of self-passion and self-interest.

The self is too much with us—too much with us in business, in the state, in the church, in the home. And the morality of self is as cruel, as

lacking in luster and loveliness, as hard, as satanic, as the morality of the multitude, the morality of the man in the street, whether we meet him in Chicago, New York or London. The reason that corruption prospers like a toadstool in the night is because there is so much of self in politics. The reason that finance is so treacherous, subtle and unscrupulous is because there is so much of self in commerce. The reason that the church is scourged with the same maladies that afflict the world—avarice, opinionativeness, arrogant and pushing pride, insincerity and duplicity—is because religion is so impregnated with the virus of self. The reason that marriage is so often a squalor, a turbulence, an anarchy, an ignominy of petty discords and strident controversies, is because the love that goes to the altar is too frequently self-love, and not the sacramental love that should burn, a divine fire, in the heart of the bride for the bridegroom, in the heart of the bridegroom for the bride.

It is this ever-present obtrusion of self in all the interests and affairs of life that makes us somewhat reluctant to concede to the individual conscience preëminency of authority in all that per-

tains to conduct, and that constrains us to abide in the fallacy discredited by the dark facts that succeed each the other with distressing fleetness on the pages of history, that the one sovereign authority in the sphere of righteousness is not the illumined conscience of the individual, but the unillumined conscience of humanity—the humanity that fosters crime and then penalizes its victims for committing the crime it fosters; that tolerates the worship of Venus and then, with brazen hypocrisy, brands her devotees with dishonor and shame; that discriminates against an institution by the imposition of a tax of the nature of blackmail, a tax the proceeds of which are devoted to the support of the civic constabulary and the public schools, and then bestows the wrath of its Pecksniffian morality upon the poor victim of alcoholism in the form of a fine or imprisonment; that listens with avidity to the cheap expedencies and the vicious opportunisms of its demagogues and, with a sullen, obtuse scorn in its heart, turns away from its masters, the men of wisdom and of manners, so richly qualified by their high endowments to counsel, to rule and to guide.

In emphasizing the individual conscience transfigured by love as the supreme and ultimate authority in the realm of morals and manners, I am not thinking of the masses of mankind. The human world at large is, intellectually and morally, in the stage of adolescence. It is ignorant, wayward, passionate, abounding in the prejudices, bigotries, antipathies of race, of class and of cult. It needs guidance, management and restraint. And as it has neither faith in nor affinity for the higher things, perhaps the most efficient policeman for the supervision and regulation of its conduct is the conscience and the morality of the mass. The criminal, the wastrel, the thief, the drunkard, the vandal, the mendicant, the parasite, the dissolute, the ignorant, the ill taught and invertebrate members of society are incapable of moral initiative. They are children, and they can only achieve their meager destiny through the compulsion of a force external to their own wills, the compulsion of the fear of pain or ostracism; the compulsion of the state, of public opinion, of the church. The world has not yet reached the point of development where it is beyond the sanctions

of the social priesthood and the ethics of the whip.

But we are not immediately concerned with the masses of mankind. We are concerned with the few idealists of righteousness, the aristocracy of the spirit—with the elect that Isaiah had in mind when he cried out, "O Lord, save Thy people, the remnant of Israel!" In every age, in every nation, in every city, there is this remnant of Israel, the divine oligarchy of the good and the beautiful, who in meditation and prayer consort with the Infinite, who feast, with the voracity of a great hunger and with an intoxication of delight, upon the eternal verities and who strive with an unspeakable joy in their hearts "to make righteousness and the will of God prevail" upon the earth. The remnant is the world's savior. The remnant of Israel is the savior of Israel. The remnant of England is the savior of England. The remnant of America is the savior of America. The remnant of humanity is the savior of humanity. The remnant of the church is the savior of the church. God saves the many who dwell in the habitations of darkness through the vision, the fortitude and the refinement of the few who dwell in the abodes

of light. The Eternal spoke in the solitudes of the monastery to Luther. Luther spoke to Melancthon, to Zwingli and to Calvin. And this remnant of Israel proclaimed the mighty evangel and accomplished the Herculean labors of the Protestant reformation.

The mystery of truth, of holiness, of love, unveils its divinity to the eyes of the solitary dreamer. He is henceforth consecrate. He ponders, during the days of his novitiate, as did St. Paul in the wilderness of Arabia, upon the vision splendid until the day of his public ministry shall come. Then he, the prophet anointed of the Lord, whoever he may be—whether Alfred Russell Wallace, Oliver Lodge, George Meredith, Walt Whitman or Edward Carpenter—goes forth to prophesy. He speaks. One and another stops to listen and to heed, until the apostolic body is formed, and in the power and the fire and the enthusiasm of its revelation the remnant moves forward to propagandize the head and heart of humanity and to do its part in the large and full redemption of the world.

What stupendous tasks, what hosts of evil inviting subjugation, what stupidities of custom im-

ploring enfranchisement, what lusts and impurities of convention petitioning for emancipation await the remnant of Israel, the apostolate of culture, the missionaries of the ideal! The world is in sore need of enlightenment. It is pitifully in bondage to matter. It is lamentably enslaved to tradition and withered by the insolence of custom. It does not stop to interrogate the inner God, to ask the Divinity that dwells within the inmost sanctuary of the soul, "Is this right? Is this just? Is this pure? Is this honorable? Is this the fine and stately thing to do?" It goes for illumination to the dull, suborned oracle of propriety and assuages its tradition-seared conscience by a perfunctory submission to the unmoral edicts of a hard and obsolete legality. When we see the men and women of our day selling their birthright for a mess of potage, crying with ever louder voice, like the children of Israel in the wilderness, for the fleshpots, prostrating themselves in degrading obeisance before Mammon, the god of this world, making food and finery and display their highest good, the be-all and the end-all of their existence; when we see those who are in the high places, who constitute society and who are prominent in the

affairs of business, finance and politics, more concerned about the trivial comforts of the body than they are about the illumination of their minds and the culture of their souls; when we see marriage, the most sacred institution of society, which more than any other institution involves the honor, the chivalry and the purity of its votaries, converted into a prison and made to subserve, not the behest of love, but the ambition for an establishment, and reduced to the shabby dimensions of a ceremony that justifies, but that cannot purify, the metallic lust committed in its name and sanctioned by its authority; when we see on every side these pathetic perversions of the glorious talent of life, we realize the need of a higher goodness, a diviner morality—the morality of the soul enlightened and enlarged with the righteousness that has its origin and sanction, not in the crass decalogue of public opinion, not in the obsolescent traditions of society, but in the eternities, in the justice and the purity whose dwelling place is the bosom of God, in the conscience of man made in His own image, the individual conscience, strengthened, ennobled, sweetened and humanized by the ideal of life and conduct and manners whose authority,

whose inspiration, is the holy sacrament of love.

Love is in very deed the light of life, the soul of goodness, the solace of our struggles, the laughter in the heart of joy, the substance and the coronation of our victory, the consummation of the law. It "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth. And now abideth faith, hope, love; these three, but the greatest of these is love."

CHAPTER XVII

TREASURES OF DARKNESS

WITH whatever suavity the forces of our spirit may move toward their goal, with whatever facility the mechanism of our talents may operate in the accomplishment of the task allocated to them by personal preference or the pressure of conditions, life is bound to develop many frictions, to encounter many unpleasantnesses and to contend with many resistances in its meandering flow, through multitudinous and ever-varying terrestrial experiences, toward the ocean of eternity. There is always some blemish that mars, some sharp, jutting edge of unpropitious circumstance that frets the felicity of life. Perfection is the prerogative of the Infinite. The fortune of man is shadowed by the incompleteness of his own being and the evils that cross as a woof the warp of destiny. And the higher the spirit within him rises toward the zenith of its powers; the nearer

it approaches to the stature, the culture, the ethical symmetry, the emotional sensibility of man in his great day of fruition, the heavier are the clouds that encircle him; the more painful the doubts of his mind; the intenser the sorrows that rest on his heart.

Every excellence has the defect of its qualities. The excellence of the light is that it brings the beauty that is hidden in the darkness into visibility. Its defect is that it makes manifest, with an irritating indiscriminateness, the unbeautiful with the beautiful. With the same ray of light, it gratifies the eye with the delicate loveliness of the blossoms that adorn the branches and offends the eye by the revelation of the ugliness of the lizard that crawls on the trunk of the sourwood tree. The elephant is strong, but it is deficient in agility and grace of movement. The male cardinal bird is exquisite in its coloring. Perched on the ultimate prong of a dead branch, when laved with the light of the sun, it shimmers like a jewel; it palpitates with the soft and passionate red that burns in the heart of the ruby. But the very splendor of its adornment is its menace. It betrays the presence of the cardinal bird

and invites the attack of the hawk. The superiority of the greyhound is the swiftness of movement that results from its peculiar structure, the length and sinuosity of its body, the strength and range of its legs. The inferiority of the greyhound is that it not seldom misses its prey in the velocity of its flight. Its strength is weakness, and its speed is a hindrance.

Man also is subject to this law, that every excellence carries with it the defect of its qualities. The advantage of the pedestrian temperament of the peasant lies in its insusceptibility to the more subtle annoyances and the finer pains. The disadvantage of the earthiness of the peasant lies in a corresponding and proportionate insusceptibility to the higher pleasures and the more exquisite stimulations. On the other hand, the virtue of intellectual culture, and of the acute and responsive sensibility that is the normal concomitant of intellectual culture, is that it greatly enlarges the area of interest, augments the power of achievement and intensifies the joy of living. But if culture has its blessings, it has not less certainly its retributions. There is always a penalty attached to fineness of organization. The riddle

of the universe and the enigma of life develop *pari passu* with every extension of reason and every recession of the horizons of the imagination.

The elaborately evolved nerves that thrill the soul with sensations of inexpressible delight, by the delicacy of their structure and the rapidity of their vibration often imperil the health, unstabilize the will, convulse the heart with turbulent and morbid passions and menace the poise and sanity of the mind. The man whose conscience is immaculate and in a high degree sensitive to the appeal and the compulsion of the ideal exults in the spirit of beauty in its form of final loveliness, clothed in its most resplendent garments, the beauty of holiness. Yet there is always associated with his keen pleasure in the beauty of the good an excruciating sensitiveness to the ugliness of evil, to indelicacies of thought and coarsenesses of action, which would give to the man of rougher mold not the least annoyance—nay, which might, as is quite frequently the case, afford him merriment and diversion. The earth grows both more splendid with the light of heaven and more somber with the gloom of hell as the eye of conscience be-

comes more finely adjusted to the holiness of the Eternal. The world was to Jesus a beatitude and a crucifixion. His way was not more a *via gloriosa* than it was a *via dolorosa*. His crown of honor was a crown of thorns. With every higher ascent toward the summit where the ideal reigns in the resplendency of perfect beauty, we develop an ever-deepening consciousness of the sharp angles and the wearing maladjustments of life. We suffer in the measure of our superiorities. The area of the unknown enlarges with the area of our knowledge. The greater our attainment, the more humbling is the consciousness of our non-attainment. In every age and land, the unimaginative Pharisee praying in the temple thanks God that he is holier than "this Publican," while, standing afar off in the retirement of his shame, the Publican, his imagination aflame with the light of the spirit and oppressed with a sense of the unworthiness and the sin revealed by the spirit's presence, beats his breast and cries aloud in the anguish of his contrition, "God, be merciful to me a sinner!" As the shadow deepens with the increasing brightness of the light, so the darkness and the sorrow of sin deepen as the light of

holiness waxes in the soul. It is not Judas Iscariot; it is St. Paul who calls himself "the chief of sinners."

The world grows in materiality and coarseness with every increment of spirituality, with every sublimation of our thoughts, with every finer transfiguration of our loves. The progression of thought means the progression of mystery. It is love that touches life with pathos and that clothes death with the somber robes of mourning. The more we love, the more painful are the temporary lesions in the circle of our affections. And the more tenderly we love, the darker is the tragedy of the great, the final lesion, the lesion wrought by death, at once man's most ruthless enemy and his sweetest friend. As our faculties grow in comprehension; as we present to the world a larger, fuller, finer consciousness, the world becomes more glorious, more wonderful, more enthralling in its majesty, more entrancing in its beauty, more and more surgent with the fire and the joy of life.

And yet, as the glory of the world increases; as it becomes more dear to us; as the soul and the world are locked closer and closer in the embrace of a vast, reciprocal passion, the soul, day

by day and hour by hour, becomes more conscious of the fugitiveness of the great amour, the transitoriness of its glory, the evanescence of its grace. Through all the long, the weary, the wonderful sojourn of man upon this planet, a vast sorrow has brooded over his heart, a sorrow that has deepened in its pathos and passion with the enlargement of his culture and the enrichment of his love, as the mist deepens upon the meadows in the mornings of autumn with the procession of the days. There is no end to the travail of his soul. Nature's law of compensation is immutable, impartial, inexorable. The more superbly he lives, the larger, the heavier, will be the penalty he will have to pay for living. We ask our own souls; we catechize, even in our silences, each the other; we interrogate the masters—Plato, Plotinus, Seneca, Epicurus, Spinoza, Kant, Hegel, Paul and Jesus—who have pondered with deepest reverence and with most searching understanding upon the mysteries of life; we seek, with unwearying patience, the solution of this mystery of pain, of suffering, of sorrow, the whence of the world's anguish, the why of the cosmic crucifixion, "the lamb slain from the foundation of the world," but the lips

of the oracle are sealed. The great enigma dwells now, as it has always dwelt, in the deeps of an impenetrable reticence.

The philosophy of the Christian church—a philosophy, however, unsanctioned by the teaching of its Master—roots the catastrophic element that mars with its dissonance almost every phrase of the symphony of life in the freedom of the will of man. Suffering, sorrow, evil and death are, according to the theology of the church, the bitter and logical fruits of original sin. The ravel came into the skein of the cosmos with the primeval aberrancy of human nature, with “man’s first disobedience and his fall.” This interpretation of the tragic note in the drama of humanity is lacking in convincingness because the evil of existence is not confined to the narrow area presided over by the will of man. It is the sad dowry of all life. The brute shares with man the searching pains of dissolution and the anguish of the wounded heart. If death be the unique wages apportioned to sin, then the whole world of life and sentiency that lies beyond the reach and the sovereignty of will must be in a state of sin, because it is on a parity with man in the matter of

the penalty of sickness and of death. The will of man has, no doubt, deepened the gloom of sorrow and aggravated the shrillness of the woes of tragedy. It cannot, however, be chargeable with the deadly virus that lurks in the fangs of the rattlesnake, with the massiveness and cruelty of the jaws of the lion, with the formidable claws of the eagle, designed to seize and to rend its prey. Man plays an important rôle in the drama of the world, but, though his talents be of a high order of excellence and his histrionism be august in its intensity and in its proportions, he is not equal to the part assigned in the Zoroastrian philosophy to Ahriman, the god of darkness, the creator of evil and the progenitor of the world's woes.

The Karma of Buddhism, as a venture toward the vindication of the supernal equity, suffers, it seems to me, from the same metaphysical inadequacy as the free will of the theology of Christianity. Karma defers; it does not solve the mystery. That the present catastrophe has its equation in some antecedent perversity, some anterior incarnation of the soul, may explain why I do suffer at the present moment; but it does not explain how evil ever got a lodgment in a universe

whose creator is sovereign will and whose heart is large with infinite love. The tragedy and doom of the creature must originally have been contained within the plan and the purpose of the Creator. But how could a being who is infinite in power, wisdom and love decree a world into existence, the cardinal note of whose drama is the note of pathos, and whose song reaches its inevitable climax, not in a shout of triumph, but in a lamentation of defeat?


I think the only way to mitigate the problem of the world's suffering on this side of the eternities is to concede the infinity of the divine love and to limit the strength of the divine arm. The dynamic of the eternal will is vast, enormously vast, but by reason of self-imposed limitation it falls short of infinity. The great Artificer of the heavens, by the lordly decree of His will, can evoke visible worlds and constellations of worlds, suns, moons and planets into being from the latent, invisible stuff of the universe, but He cannot create something out of nothing; nor can He make a circle with the lines of a triangle; nor can He give the substance of truth to the thing that is false; nor can He make the treachery in the heart

of Judas one in sublimity with the fealty to the Eternal that dominated the heart of Christ. Mighty is Jehovah, but were He mighty in his physical creativeness to infinity, He could not, by the puissance of His desire, will into being the ultimate glory of humanity, the glory of character, without the antecedent condition of struggle and strife. The supreme Moralist might have decreed a spirit into being, the garment of whose holiness would be as immaculate as the whiteness of the freshly fallen snow; but this holiness would be the non-moral holiness of innocence, and not the moral, the heroic holiness of character. Character is the product of the storms. It is wrought out of the anarchies and perturbations of the spirit. It is achieved in the lonesomeness and the darkness of the night of the soul. Its way is the way of controversy, of temptation, of contest. Its theater of strife is the wilderness. Its emblem is the cross.

We must judge life, with its dark treasures of desolation and sorrow and tears, not by the evasive casuistries of metaphysical theorists, but by the virile, stalwart, intrepid standard of pragmatism. The problem of evil, as in its origin and neces-

sity it is articulated with the eternities, may be lost forever in the concealment that veils a thousand mysteries. If, however, the struggle, the bitterness and the servitude of life are the stepping stones whereby we reach the heights of the soul's divinity; if through the commotion, the squalor, the tumult, the strife and the din, the discords and the pains of the world we evoke the buried life, we attain self-regency, we achieve the possession and the mastery of the higher self, we crown life with its supreme triumph—the triumph of character, the triumph of the God in us over the world, the flesh and the devil—then we have light enough to guide us on our way and to send us forth into the fight with a song in our hearts. And I am sure, whatever else may be doubtful in this world, that the Gethsemane in which humanity has, through the ages, sorrowed and agonized and wept has its pragmatic sanction in the fact—confirmed, not only by the biographies of the great lights of history that rule the day, but also by the universal experience of the lesser lights that rule the night—that only in its shadows do we overcome the Apollyon and enthrone the Christ in us.

The wisdom that tells us that "necessity is the mother of invention" is only the concretion in an aphorism of a universal law. All enterprise has its inception in a want. All accomplishment has its inspiration in a deficiency. Discomfort is the spur of industry. And poverty is the instigation of frugality. We labor with a greater ardor to attain the possession we have not than to keep intact the possession we have. The inspiring and exalting story of man's progress in his management of matter, in his mastery of knowledge, in his conquest of the treasures of the spirit, is a story of resistances overcome and obstacles surmounted. We grow by opposition, and we unfold unto the stature of the full-orbed life by antagonism. Man has won his final prowess, the strength of his body, the resiliency of his muscles and the poise of his nerves, not by sitting in an arm-chair by the ingle on a winter's night and reading treatises on "how to grow strong," and "how to enjoy good health," but by the sterner method of buffeting with the oppugnant winds; by contending with the hard, resistant earth; by holding with tense arms the plow in the furrow; by smiting with the force of a Vulcan the ruddy



iron on the anvil; by furling and unfurling the sails of the vessel as it sweeps over the sea, in sunshine and in storm; by climbing, with slow and tedious steps, the sides of the hills; by walking with a free and eager stride over the prairies and the meadows; and by wrestling with the forces and the energies of nature, whose resistance is the substance of his vigor, and whose obduracy is the source and the stay of his strength.

All culture is conquest. One does not attain power and clarity of vision by the inertia, but by the action and the strain, of the intellect. There is no easy path to learning. Light involves effort. Illumination is the product of the major tensions and the petty frictions of the intellect and the will in contact with reality. All the treasures of knowledge—every fact, every law, every mystery of matter, every apocalypse of the spirit—lie secreted in the abysses of effort, in the inmost recesses of travail and strain. The "*Divina Commedia*" was not woven of diaphanous dreams: it was evoked from the toil and the travail of the years—from the wealth of sweet and bitter experiences undergone; from the multitudinous facts absorbed and classified; from the countless books

of science, theology, ethics and poetry read, pondered and mastered; from the long and concentrated observations of the spirit, the ambitions, the prejudices, the passions, the lusts, the virtues, the loves and the hates of man as they reveal themselves in the individual, in church and in state, in monarch, in statesman, in artist, in scholar, in traitor, in patriot, in pope, in monk, in mystic, in saint and in lover; from the great titanic thoughts of Dante's mind, the passions, high and low, good and evil, of Dante's heart.

And if it be true that the light of the intellect is only attained through friction, it is also true that the brighter, the finer the light, the greater is the friction, the greater the wear and the tear of the intellect. The content of the wisdom and the consummation of the efforts, the studies and the meditations which stretch over the spaces of the more than three score years and ten of the life of Thomas Browne are confined within the small compass of two volumes—the "Urn Burial," known only to the few students who have an affinity for the eccentric and the quaint in letters; and the "Religio Medici," of more popular appeal, a most noble book and, perhaps, when we consider

the age in which it was written, the most superbly catholic book in the English tongue. Francis Bacon—one of the two commanding minds of the marvelously fecund age of Elizabeth, of whom Macaulay says “he moved the intellects that moved the world”—concentrated his massive genius, his almost seventy years of observation, of academic learning, of sustained reflection on the facts and the laws of nature, the customs, the motives and the manners of mankind, in two immortal works, the “*Novum Organum*,” which has interest chiefly for the scholar whose predilections are for science; and the “*Essays*,” which belong with the Bible and the drama of Shakespeare in the universality of their range, their influence and their charm. He wrought all the light and fire, all the labors and lucubrations, all the musings, scrutinies, criticisms, reflections and conclusions of his masterful intellect, all the trials, the struggles, the cynicisms, the skepticisms, the joys and the pathos of his heart into a single volume, whose wondrous apothegms are as instinct with effort as they are pregnant with wisdom.

In the refinement of its spirit, the perfection of its form and the subtle delicacy of its prose,

"Marius the Epicurean," of Walter Pater, is, I believe, the consummation of English literature. The style of this exquisite meditation on life in the mode of fiction is of ultimate finish, and the manner of its workmanship is of final loveliness. Marius, the young Roman, aristocratic, chivalrous, noble, sensitive, of the transitional times of the Antonines, is a portrait in miniature of the high-born soul of Walter Pater. His spirit travailed in labor pains for many years before it came to birth in the serene beauty, in the patrician fineness of the Epicurean. He died daily in his soul and in his art, that his genius might rise from strength to strength and from grace to grace.

The larger and the more intimate our converse with the noble history of science and of letters, with the luminaries that have lifted the earth out of the twilight of its early morning and have flooded it with the light of knowledge—with the biographies of Goethe, Darwin, Faraday, Shakespeare, Hugo, Carlyle, Shelley, Hawthorne and Emerson—the more vividly we realize that every illuminating thought, every sweet meditation, every aphorism of wisdom for the enrichment of the mind and the guidance of conduct, every larger

understanding of nature and of humanity, every fuller comprehension of the mysteries and the forces of the universe, every song, whether of epic grandeur or of lyric sweetness, is a treasure evoked from the darkness; and that the more resplendent the treasure is, the denser and the more difficult of penetration is the darkness in which it lies concealed by the strategy of a wisdom that passes all understanding. It is with the reluctance and with the slow apprehension of indolence that we learn that the lamp of truth burns only in the sanctuary of darkness, and that we must grope our way with persistency and with patience if we would win the light of truth, more beauteous than the light of rising or of setting sun. The Lord and Giver of all good and perfect gifts does not throw the torch of wisdom at our feet. It is not, as we would feign believe, in the superficial and cursory philosophy of the migratory prophet; it is not in the facile courses in literature, economics, ethics and art, in which we indulge with a wild intemperance of enthusiasm in these swift and shallow days; it is not in the trivial, flippant books, written for the uncritical and irritating novitiates in the temple of knowledge, that we shall find the wisdom that

enlarges and the truth that illumines the path of life. It is, rather, in the obstinacies of fact; it is in the veiled deeps of reality; it is in the profundities of universal law; it is in the vaguenesses of the world-process; it is in the subtleties of the human soul; it is in the secrecies and silences of the matter, the energy, the destiny and the spirit of the cosmos, that man finds the light of culture and the sweep, the sanity and the charm of the academic mind.

Furthermore, it is in the darkness, in the shadowed realm of doubt, suffering and sorrow—in the Calvaries, with their crucial griefs and their bitter failures, that await every one of us in turn somewhere along the path of the years—that we divest our souls of the pretentiousness, the vanity and the unsocial pride that have held us aloof from the world, and become incorporate with humanity, one in consciousness and in affection with the vast multitude, with rich and poor, with the urbane and the rustic, with the learned and the illiterate, with the good and the evil of mankind, with the great democracy—the ungroomed, unmannered, unenlightened, but none the less robust, noble, heroic son of God. By reason of some

perversity of human nature, prosperity in all of its forms of manifestation is deficient in the spirit of camaraderie. Strength is prone to be arrogant. Wealth tends toward exclusiveness. Culture inclines to superciliousness. Godliness not seldom assumes the mien of pride. The sublime motto on the escutcheon of chivalry, "Noblesse Oblige," is not operative as an ideal in the conduct of our times, in which magnificence and grace of action are virtues "more honored in the breach than in the observance." We stand too near to the poverty, the crude circumstance, the social obscurity from whose imprisonment we have just been emancipated by the magic of our riches. It is inconvenient to continue in the old friendships that remind us of the infelicity, the penury and the meager entourage of our origin, the gaucheries of thought and speech and manner of our autochthonous days. We lack the proud security of high breeding, the fine self-consequence that is the distinguishing mark of the man or the woman who is to the manner born. We do not know how to move in the new world, whose favor has been purchased by our fortune, with the suavity of approach and withdrawal, with the large, unconscious freedom

that designates the bearing of those who inherit the most precious of all patrimonies, a tradition of fine manners, a natural, obvious dignity of mien, from an ancestry whose ideals are so matured with time that they are of the essence and the habit of the blood.

The society that is proximate to the plow and the mechanic's bench is always morbid about its recently achieved honors, always nervous and insecure in the bewildering intricacy of the new setting, and as "distance lends enchantment to the view," lacking the noble distinction of birth, it takes refuge in the ignoble distinction of the remote manner, the insolent air and the frozen mien. It is only the lords of our kind, as rich in the royal virtue of simplicity as they are in the treasures of gold, who can wear their eminence with a patrician naturalness of manner and with a noble kindliness of heart. With the lesser men—and in the realms of prosperity, of power, of learning the lesser men constitute the vast majority—wealth is snobbish, strength is unsocial and culture is exclusive. Our superiority estranges us, our distinction desocializes us and our excellence, whatever it may be—whether an excellence of tal-

ent, of taste or of craft—segregates us. And the deplorable consequence of these various pre-eminences is that the great, glorious world is broken into petty fragments, into hostile camps, into alien organizations, into classes and masses, into plutocrats and paupers, into citizens desirable and undesirable, into rich and poor, into those who are professional reformers and those who need reformation, into saints who grow impatient with the sinners and sinners who scorn the veneered holiness of the saints, into industrial groups, religious fraternities and social cliques, into clusters of stars of differing degrees of magnitude, splendor and importance. Humanity is not the noble solidarity of our dreams. It is millenniums distant from the day that celebrates the assembling of "the parliament of man, the federation of the world."

The human world is a vast incoherence of schisms—race, national, economic, social and religious schisms. And it is from the loins of these schisms, which are the offspring of the passion of preëminency, whence are born the ill-humors, the hates, the anarchies, the revolutions and the wars that ravage and desolate this earth and make man's life upon the earth, his brief and precious day, a

strain, a tension, a burden, instead of the sweet delight it ought to be.

Now, the Eternal, with a wisdom at once ruthless and tender, has anointed and ordained the austere prophet of darkness to the divine task of restoring the ancient unity, of fusing the schismatic elements into concord; of making, not only of one blood, but of one mind, one heart, one worship and one divinity, all the nations of men, all the peoples of the earth. There is cohesion in darkness. We separate in the light of day, but we congregate in the shadows of the night. We go our various ways under the tranquil sky, but when the storm breaks we seek a common center in search of the courage of companionship. There is difference in laughter, but there is brotherhood in tears. A great soul, who suffered sharp indignity and harsh usage at the hand of Fate, said "failure is a great leveler." It is a bitter truth. There is democracy in adversity. The unity that we break with our victories we cement with our defeats. There is a tremendous social gravity in calamity. A modern poet sings "O sorrow, cruel fellowship! O priestess in the vaults of death!" There is fellowship in sorrow. Races, nations, families, in-

dividuals forget their antagonisms and their hostilities in times of great and searching grief. There is neither Slav nor Teuton; there is neither Catholic nor Protestant; there is neither Moham-
medan nor Christian in the sorrows that intone their dirge in the depths of the heart of mankind.

It is the man without race that battles against Satan in the wilderness for the mastery of his soul. It is neither Jew nor Gentile: it is man; it is humanity that dies upon the cross. The world divides into numberless fragments in the power and pomp of Christianity: it is all one in the weakness and the suffering of the Galilean martyr. How wonderful in their truth are the words of the Prince of Peace, the High Priest of the divine brotherhood, "I, if I be lifted up, shall draw all men unto me." There is not only an ineffable pathos; there is an infinite wisdom, an infallible psychology, in this evangel of power and compulsion—a power born of weakness; a compulsion whose eloquence is the anguish of a broken heart. The supreme significance of the cross is that it symbolizes the return of humanity to the glory of its lost unity through suffering, weakness and humiliation. The brotherhood of man is one of the superlative treasures of

darkness. Man must march on his way to the City of God to the accompaniment of the murmur of his sorrows and the music of his sighs.

The high function of the catastrophic aspect of every life—of all doubts, sorrows, burdens, lamentations, defeats and crucifixions—is to overcome the schisms of immemorial antiquity, the schisms that separate mind from mind, heart from heart, man from man, and race from race; and to make us all one, a great, catholic democracy of love, a universal and divine fraternity of good will and peace. The wisdom of experience teaches us no lesson that is more important and more vitally related to our highest well-being than that he lives most like a god who carries his cross with unfaltering fortitude of will, who bears his sufferings with a silent dignity of spirit and who redeems humanity with the sweetness of his sorrows, the kindness of his tears.

CHAPTER XVIII

ON THE SUMMIT

"IN the beginning was the Word, the Spirit, and the Spirit was made flesh"—matter—"and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth." I think one would search the world of philosophy in vain for a more succinct, a more intelligible theory of creation than is bound up in these words, which are the quintessence of Christian theology. This interpretation of the mystery of origins has the merit of inclusiveness. It is synthetic. Spirit, in the cosmogony of St. John, has the primacy over matter by virtue of the excellence of its properties; but matter shares with spirit the dignity of the cosmic order. Spirit and matter belong to one another. They constitute a unity of being in two modes. Their union is co-extensive with consciousness upon this earth plane. They are everywhere, within the horizons of actual experience, correspondent and coöperative.

Spirit, under the present limitations of our thought, is inconceivable without matter, and matter exists for us only within the boundaries of spirit. We know nothing of thought, or will, or love, without form; and we know nothing of matter except as interpreted by our senses and defined in our thought. We cannot escape matter. It is the shadow of our consciousness. It lives with us, thinks with us, rejoices with us, weeps with us, suffers with us, dies with us; and it goes with us into the unknown. The immortality of a formless personality is unthinkable. A soul—thought without expression; love without incarnation; will without embodiment—wending its way through the eternities in a pale abstraction of being is an immortality beyond conception. If it were conceivable, it would be less interesting than absolute extinction. Corporeality is of the essence of any thinkable, any desirable immortality. St. Paul does not teach the doctrine of the immortality of the soul which is regarded as orthodox by the church. He sings, in the sublime apostrophe to the resurrection in the First Epistle to the Corinthians, of the immortality of man, "There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body." The

spiritual body is, no doubt, as transparent as the ether and as viewless as the air, but the point I wish to make is that it is a body. Spirit and matter, in time and eternity, dwell together in the conjunction of an indissoluble alliance.

Matter is a permanency of consciousness. It underlies all life, all power, all thought, all beauty, all spirituality. Every superior civilization has its roots in economic wealth and material prosperity. Egyptian commerce was the pioneer of Egyptian architecture, the pyramids of the desert, the temples of Karnak and Memphis; of Egyptian culture, its ethics, its philosophy, its religion and its worship, which have descended to our own day through the Hebraisms of Christianity. Greece was rich before it was academic and artistic. The wealth of its merchants preceded and made possible the idealism of Plato, the realism of Aristotle, the drama of Sophocles, the lyrics of Theocritus, the histories of Thucydides and Herodotus, the sculpture of Pheidias and Praxiteles, and the oratory of Demosthenes and Phocion. Material affluence is the handmaiden of beauty. It is to Pericles, the man of affairs, and to the men of his age who achieved the commercial glory of Attic

Greece, that we owe the Propylæum and the Parthenon, the Athena Promachos and the Olympian Zeus. The artisan is always the progenitor of the artist. The agora is the predecessor of the academy, in every country and in every civilization. It was the Medicis, the rich patricians and the masters of commerce—the shop owners, the goldsmiths, the usurers, the traders in foods, in silks and in jewels—that made the Florence of the early Renaissance—the Florence of philosophy, of letters, of art—the glory of its age and the admiration of the world.

Matter is not only the foundation of civilization, the servant of knowledge, the forerunner of the academy, the patron of the humanities, the avant-courier of the graces and the amenities of art; it is also a force of epic significance in the individual life. However spiritual we may be; however high we may soar into the fine air of the Emersonian over-world; with whatever passion of emphasis we may deny this mundane scheme of things, the fact is, we are prisoners to the authority and the charm of matter. We think and we dream matter; we touch and we taste matter; we see and we hear in the terms of matter; we live and

we love in the vibrations of matter; we act upon others and others act upon us, we communicate with others and others communicate with us, through the medium of matter, and exclusively through the medium of matter. Formless thought is incommunicable thought. Bodiless love is love without significance or impact. We know motherhood, not as some occult essence, but by the soothing touch of the mother's hand, the tender light in the mother's eye. We know the sweetness, the grace, the rapture of the love of the beloved, not through the pale stuff of insubstantial dreams, but through contacts and communions of unutterable subtlety. And we behold the power, the majesty and the love of God, not in the void and shapeless realm of space, but in the glory of the light of day, in the pensive, tranquil beauty of the stars by night, in the rugged strength of the scarped cliffs, in the roll and the roar of the sea, in the lyrics of the birds, in the grace and aroma of the flowers. Nature was an apocalypse of the "divinity that shapes our ends, rough hew them how we will" to the God-enraptured vision of Jesus. "Consider the lilies of the field. They toil not, neither do they spin. And yet I say unto you that

even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore if God so clothe the grass of the field which to-day is and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith!" There is more divinity in the ray of light that leaps to gladden the eye from the yellow heart of the jonquil than is to be found in all the metaphysics of the ages, from the dialogues of Plato to the "Creative Evolution" of Bergson.

And yet, though the material world be fraught with ministries of light and beauty, with the vigor and the glow, the elixir and the joy of life, it is important that we should learn that it is not an end in itself, but a means, the means of self-realization. The summum bonum of life is not the prosperity of matter, but the prosperity of the soul. Matter is not the permanent residence; it is the temporary lodging place of the spirit. The world is not a goal; it is a process. Wealth is not life; it is the instrument of life. Nature is not God; it is a prophet, without race or nationality, the one catholic, universal revelation of God. We must not rest in the finite; it is our business and our duty to press on and move steadily forward—

through all temporal and fragmentary experiences; through the sights and scenes of the world; through the illuminations of literature and the delights of art; through the splendors of nature and the praises of the temple; through the soughings of the winds and the sighings of the forest as it wrestles with the fury of the storm; through the myriad pleasures of sense; through the fugitive musings and dreams of the mind; through the strifes, the defeats, the victories of the will; through the emotions, the passions and the loves of the heart—to find our rest in the strength of the everlasting arms and in the serene deeps of the Eternal spirit.

The highest hour that comes to man on this earth plane is when, standing on the summit of some wondrous experience—some elation of the mind entranced by the splendor of the celestial vision, some ecstasy of the soul enchained by the hypnotic beauty of the world, some exaltation of the heart in the emotions of an overwhelming and gloriously self-forgetting devotion, some sudden bursting forth of divine love in the solitude and silence of prayer—he realizes for the first time, and for all time, that the world's forces, great and

small—all of life, from the dawning to the setting of its sun; all the mottled, multiform drama of the soul of man, its hungers, its thirsts, its ambitions, its longings, its conquests, its failures, its loves, its hates, its joys, its sorrows, its virtues and its sins—dwell in the light and accomplish the purpose and abide in the love of the Infinite spirit. “Life in God and God in life,” as Malebranche puts it; man enveloped in God and God incarnate in man; the self engulfed in the Infinite and the Infinite inhabiting, ennobling and enlightening the self; to be submerged, imprisoned in and expanded with the spirit of the universe, the vast, unhorizoned, cosmic love—this is the supreme beatitude; this is the final triumph, the ultimate summit of life!

As if impelled by a subconscious tendency that transcends the logic of the conduct of life as the pellucid sky by day transcends in purity, delicacy and loveliness the gray-brown soil that we press beneath our feet, however material our standards of action, however metallic and physical our ideals of felicity may be, we crown with our approbation and reverence, not the men mighty in the matters and affairs of time, but the men of the spirit, the

men of light and of holiness, the men of love and devotion, the men of God, who, while kneeling to pray in the sanctuary, in the wilderness, in the forest, or on the mountain top, have bathed their brows in the light of the sun. A voice has spoken to us in the midst of all our greed, our lust, our selfishness and our sin; and it has told us that these beautiful souls are the chosen of the Eternal; that they, these impracticable dreamers, these mystical visionaries, these children of the light, these poets of the spirit, these ethereal denizens of the over-world, have discovered the perfect way, have found the treasure of great price, have entered into "the joy of the Lord" and won life's last and greatest victory, "the peace that passeth all understanding."

The soldiers of fortune, the men mighty in finance, the rich, the powerful, the dominating masters of their peoples and their generations, come and go and the waves of the sea of time settle over them and we forget them, as at night we forget the fugitive impressions of the early morning. There is none so obsequious as to uphold their majesty, and none so poor as to do them reverence. The gladiators of the sword—Philip of Macedon,

Alexander, Cæsar and Napoleon, Charlemagne and Charles Martel—come and go, and though we remember them, we do not cherish them in our affections. But the holy men, the saints, the devotees of the spirit, the Elijahs of all nations, the Buddhas of all ages and the Christs of all peoples, the prophets who in bitter, aching loneliness and in the midst of the menacing, hostile multitudes have lifted up a standard for the people, the monks who have, in the silence and the cheerlessness of their cells, agonized for the world's salvation, the meek, the gentle, the magnanimous, the pitiful redeemers who have lived in ostracism and died in anguish, that they might make more visible to the world the authoritativeness and the beauty of the ideal—these fair children of the Most High we not only remember, we revere, adore and exalt them in the sanctuary of memory; we enshrine them in the love of our heart. They command our reverence because we know that they belong with the gods, and they compel our devotion because an inward witness tells us that they are the real masters of life, the only monarchs of this world who wear their crowns by divine right.

The disadvantage of the life on the summit of

the spirit is its vagueness, its insubstantiality, the indeterminateness of its outlines. The advantage of it is the eternalness of its achievements, the reality of its blessings, the divineness of its consummations. It is a life of noble and impressive dignity. The cloud that rests upon these mortal days of ours, and touches them with a subtle melancholy, is the apparent fragmentariness and inconsequence of all things, of all experiences. There is majesty in the obduracy, the perversity, of the human will. There is a solemn dignity in sin. There is a Promethean sublimity in man's defiance of the sovereign authority of the reigning Zeus. The soul is clothed with the splendor of its heroic setting when, in superb temerity, it contends with the lightnings; and even when it succumbs, there is a tragic greatness in its defeat. But the eventless hours, the routine of the days, the endless reiteration of petty thoughts and actions, the wearisome grind of the habitual task, the lack of obvious and unique significance in the bulk of our accomplishment, the drabness of our motives, the cheapness of our interests, the transitoriness of our efforts and the utter negativity of our influences—this is, I think, the wormwood and

the gall of life. "O mighty Cæsar, dost thou lie so low? Are all thy conquests, glories, triumphs, spoils shrunk to this little measure?" These words of lamentation spoken by Marc Antony in the forum of Rome over the body of the mightiest Roman of his times, however inapplicable they may be to the great Cæsar of history, are strikingly pertinent to a yet greater Cæsar, the Cæsar of humanity.

When we measure life by its definable values, by its manifest achievements, by its calculable results, by the evidential worth of its thoughts, its loves, its performances, what a thing of penury, what a colorless, jejune, unimpressive drama it seems for the most part to be! It is an utter pathos. The *dénouement* is a poor and pitiful anticlimax, so incongruous with the high dreams of the morning of life, so unworthy of the imperial faculties and powers of the soul.

But what a royal dignity the spirit of man wears when we think of it as ensphered in the Infinite, as inwrought with the Eternal processes, as an ever-living word in the stupendous drama of the universe! It is only when we dislocate life from its cosmic setting that it becomes cheap and

paltry and lusterless. When we behold life in the great scheme of things, in the oceanic roll and movement of the world-purpose; when we think of the individual spirit as a part of the Eternal dynamic, as an agent, a minister, a plenipotentiary of the Supreme Highness; when we contemplate every thought, every act, every heroism, every struggle, every love, in the vastness, the sublimity, the inconceivable glory of "the one far-off, divine event toward which the whole creation moves," then life is divine with the divineness of the world of which it is a part, and every movement of life, however minute and valueless it may seem in detachment, is pregnant with the power of an endless meaning; and every deed, however modest and inconspicuous it may be in separation, is large with the largeness and beautiful with the beauty of the ultimate consummation. The life of man is a life of ineffable dignity. It is clothed with celestial majesty. It is august with the intention, with the wisdom, with the duration of the supernal purpose when we live and walk in the spirit, when we dwell on the summit of prayer, meditation, love and action, with the eternities in our mind and God in our heart. In

the finite, when contrasted with the ideal, every life is an apparent failure—a bitter, sorrowful failure. In the infinite every life is a real triumph, a glorious victory. In time life is an incoherence of dull and inconsequential fragments. In eternity it is a sublime totality, all its broken efforts, its trivial moments, its vagrant dreams, its wandering moods wrought together in a divine completion, a transcendental unity of power, wisdom, holiness and beauty.

Then, again, life upon the heights moves forward in the accomplishment of its destiny with the royal ease and the fine carriage of perfect freedom. It rejoices in a large emancipation. It has no concern for the morrow and no solicitude for the day. It wears, with a sweet comfortableness and with a beautiful unconstraint, the ample and flowing garment of "the glorious liberty of the children of God." It exults in the freedom of the truth. It follows the light with undaunted heart, wherever it leads—whether to the radiant beauty of the Mount of Transfiguration or to the desolation of the wilderness, whether to the calm and the peace of the home at Bethany or to the hate and the violence of Calvary.

What a sad, craven, temporizing, opportunistic thing we make of life upon this earth plane! We are in servitude to hesitation, to dubiety, to fear. We fear poverty. And yet the great souls of all the ages have dwelt in habitual companionship with poverty, living out their stern, heroic days in a noble disdain of the comforts, the luxuries, the vanities which we, in these voluptuous times, identify with the essence of our felicity and in exchange for which we sell the birthright of the God in us.

We fear public opinion, the criticism, the chastisement of the unenlightened mob that reads with avid interest the last puerility in fiction, but that nods over Dante and yawns over Shakespeare, that in every realm has ignored genius and applauded mediocrity, that in every generation has shown its preference for Barabbas the malefactor rather than for Jesus the redeemer, "the chiefest of ten thousand and altogether lovely."

We fear to suffer, to encounter indignity, scorn and ostracism, to bear "the slings and arrows" of outrageous fortune. Yet we know, with the same certainty that we know a straight line is the shortest distance between two given points in space,

that suffering is the katharsis that cleanses the soul of its distempers, its grossnesses and its impurities; that it is the stuff out of which stalwart manhood is formed; that it is the rough fabric from which we fashion the royal virtues and the divine perfections of the spirit.

We fear to live. The mind in us calls, not for tradition, but for truth, undimmed and unveiled. The conscience yearns, not for the righteousness of the average man—a righteousness as void of the charm of virtue as it is of the courage of vice; a plebeian righteousness that hugs the earth, that crawls on its hands and its feet; a righteousness too poor for heaven and too dull for hell—the conscience yearns for the great, ample, free and fluid righteousness of the Eternal, the righteousness of a life that unfolds according to the law of its being and the genius of its structure, as the flower unfolds to the touch of the sun and the kiss of the breeze. The heart longs for affection, to love and to be loved, to revel in the fervent heat of noble passions and divine amours. But we heed not the call of the mind for truth, nor the yearning of the conscience for holiness, nor the longing of the heart for love. It is not

expedient that we should live. Life in its great moods, its commanding expressions, is an imprudence, an inconvenience, an audacity not to be tolerated by the sleek, polite Pharisaisms of society; and hence we exhaust the divine forces of the soul in diplomatic compromises, accommodations and suppressions, to the defeat of our own happiness and the impoverishment of the world.

We are all opportunists, and we are all opportunists because we are in bondage to the fear of life. We pride ourselves upon our liberties. We speak in magniloquent phrases of our freedom, as though to vote for an alderman, or a member of Congress, or a candidate for the presidency of the United States were a sufficient freedom in which man may realize the regal capacities of his soul and the high emotions of his heart. The average man is as unfamiliar with freedom in its large and superb aspects—freedom of thought, freedom of action, freedom of conscience, freedom of impulse, freedom of affection, freedom of faith—as a child is unfamiliar with the magnitudes and the movements of the astronomic world. He lives in a hut, and freedom has its habitation in the sky. He lives in the morality of time, and freedom

lives in the morality of eternity. He lives in the narrow opinions of man, and freedom lives in the illimitable amplitudes of truth. He lives in the stupid, deadening realism of tradition and custom, and freedom lives in the exalting, the ennobling idealism of the everlasting laws.

With great wisdom, with a wisdom far deeper than his understanding, has man restrained his mundane appetites and propensities with the withes of law and the fetters of convention. So long as he is a slave to the flesh; so long as he is in bondage to things; so long as he makes the sensation of the moment his beatitude; so long as he lives, thinks, loves and prays in matter; so long as he exalts Mammon to the position of primacy among the gods, it is necessary to curb his basilar and destructive passions by the fear of ostracism and by the authority of the constabulary, as it is necessary to restrain the tiger by the iron bars of its cage.

Freedom is not of the earth; it is of the heavens. It is not the privilege of the flesh; it is the privilege of the spirit. It is not the portion of those who consort with the powers of darkness, the principalities and dominions of evil in the valleys; it is

the portion of those who consort with the angelic hosts upon the summit of the spirit. When the ideal is our master passion; when the dominating desire of our heart is to be holy as God is holy and perfect as God is perfect; when we are enamored of the beauty of the good as we are now enamored of the show, the pomp, the glitter, the vanities and the baubles of this world; when we live with high delight and quivering bliss in our empyrean dreams and loves; when every thought of our mind, every motion of the blood in our veins, every impulse of our nature, every urgency of our desire seeks the sanction and obeys with implicit obedience the behest of the over-world; when we make the fair spirit of truth our guide and the holiness of the heavens our monitor, then, and then only, are we free with the freedom that magnifies the soul, that crowns life with felicity, that ministers to the nobler prosperity and the larger salvation of mankind.

Freedom is far ranging in its flights. The boundless spaces are its habitation. It cannot live in the lowlands of terrene thoughts and carnal ambitions. It pines and frets and wastes in the prison of the flesh. It loses its song in the shad-

owed realm of matter. Its empire is on the peaks of life, in the sunlit dreams, the sacramental thoughts, the chaste desires, the ardent, consuming loves, the heaven-laden prayers of the soul. On these heights it is your privilege, and mine; it is the sweet and regal privilege of the least, as it is of the greatest of men, to stand redeemed and crowned—our minds radiant with the splendor of the vision, our hearts surging with the élan of life and singing with the joy of victory—"the owners of the spheres" and the possessors of the inheritance of the saints.

And what life is comparable in service to humanity with the life that is lived in the light and the beauty of the eternities? The business of this world, the grinding and the snarling of the mills of commerce, the rush and the roar of the trains, the whirr and the whirl of the marts of trade, the exchanging, the bartering, the banking—what is the ultimate sum of it? How small in the sweep of life is its significance! In the crucial moments, when the mind is confused with the bewilderment of some dire catastrophe; when the heart is stunned with sorrow, torn with the anguish of an irreparable loss; when the eyes are filled with the

tears of affliction and we look in vain for the sweet, divine equations of our grief—what, then, does our commercialism matter? At the very moment when we most need its ministrations and its assuagements, it deserts us and leaves us alone with our heartache and our desolation. When our head is bowed before the austere and solemn mysteries of life and suffering and death, our wealth becomes an irony and our beauty turns to ashes. When we are burdened with the woes of life, we cannot find the peace for which we yearn in the wild speed in which we exult, in our light moods, as a sign of the greatness and the wonderfulness of our times. When we are weary of heart, worn to the ultimate nerve and affrighted with the bitter disillusionment, with the pathos and nothingness of all that we have thought worth while, and life has lost its tonic and its stay, we do not turn for inspiration and solace to the financial columns of the daily paper. We turn, as Tennyson did, to the celestial contemplations and the heroic meters of Shakespeare, or to the stoic meditations of Marcus Aurelius, or to the noble, martial, salutary letters of St. Paul, or to the soothing, tender, gracious words of Jesus. When

we are stricken down with the blow that arrests forever the feverish activities of our life; when we are held, powerless, in the tight embrace of the last enemy, we do not seek the aid of the apothecary. In the drastic exigency of our mortality we seek the Great Physician, and we trust only to the therapeutic power of prayer, which, if it brings not healing to our body, brings balm to our spirit. When the shadow of the great sorrow falls upon us and we stand, crushed, desolate and alone, by the bier of our beloved, we do not go to the banker for mitigation of the gloom that enthralls our thoughts, for alleviation of the sorrows that rack our hearts. We go to the church, to the divine who is the ambassador of the Eternal on earth, to the priest, the minister, the apostle of Him who is the resurrection and the life.

The test of the ideal life is not merely its application to the atomic experiences and the commonplace moods of our habitual days. The test of the ideal is its illuminativeness, its operability in the sweep and the scope of the drama of humanity, its pertinency, not only to our high and radiant hours, but also, and even yet more, its pertinency to the crucial hours, the hours of penitence, of

defeat, of sorrow, of requiem. And when we measure the greatness, the dignity, the efficacy of life by the test of its largest serviceableness, its fullest, richest worth to the world, its power to ennoble, to inspire, to comfort and to redeem—then we learn what is hidden from the casual vision by the drift and the débris of our mundane passions and intensities, that the real king of his kind, the conqueror, robust, stately, magnificent, triumphant, is the man who dwells on the summit of the spirit in blessed oneness with the Infinite, in happy concord with humanity, the lord of his own soul and the arbiter of his own destiny.

THE END

